Trials and Triumphs of A Young Preacher

KILGORE

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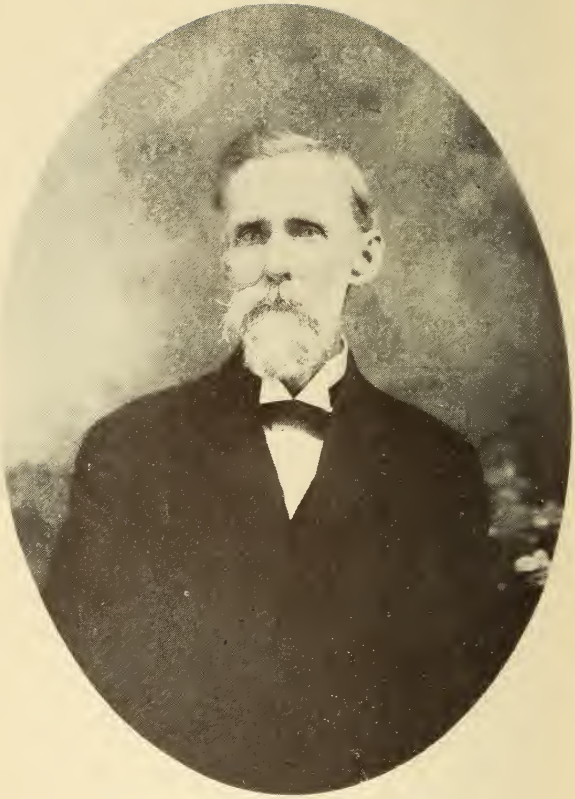

Yours Truly
E. L. Kilgore

Trials and Triumphs
of
A Young Preacher

WITH ADDITIONAL NOTES

By REV. E. G. KILGORE
Teacher, Pastor, Evangelist

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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DEDICATION.

To the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, who have in so many ways been helpful to me in my Christian life during all these years of "trials and triumphs," and to whom I am due a debt of gratitude I shall never be able to pay in this life, this volume is most respectfully and affectionately inscribed.

E. G. KILGORE.

PREFACE.

While waiting at the bedside of my sick wife day and night through many long months it occurred to my mind that, as I could not get out to do any work in my loved employ, I might spend the spare moments in jotting down some notes of my past life, which might be appreciated by my children, if no one else would be benefited by them; but the work was made such a blessing to me—in thus living my life over again—that I decided that if these notes could be put into book form and given to the public some might be profited by my mistakes as well as encouraged by the limited success that the Lord has given me in his work. And I now send it forth, feeling assured that if the reader gets out of these pages approximately the good that the writer got in preparing them the end for which the book is published will be fully accomplished. My prayers will go with it on its journeys.

E. G. Kilgore.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In this volume the reader has presented to him the experiences of thirty-five years in the Christian ministry. Sixteen years of this time have been spent in the regular pastorate, fourteen years in evangelistic work. and the remaining five years at the bedside of the sick —most of the time. During all this time I have traveled more than a hundred thousand miles in as many as twenty-eight States and Territories, with visits to the Republic of Mexico and the District of Columbia. I have held revival meetings definitely in twenty of these States, in which more than ten thousand conversions have been reported, with upward of eight thousand additions to the Church. It has not all been smooth sailing by any means. There has been a recurrence of calm and storm, sunshine and shadow, grief and joy, pain and pleasure, hardships and happiness. "The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."

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TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS OF A YOUNG PREACHER.

CHAPTER I.

Family and Birth.

The writer of these pages was born in Calhoun County, Miss., November 30, 1856. My father and mother were natives of Darlington County, S. C., where they grew up together in the Hartsville neighborhood, and were married in 1838. A little more than a year later they moved, with a large number of others, to the above-named State and county, where they lived the remainder of their lives.

My mother's maiden name was Huldah Hay. Her people all remained in the old State, except one sister, Mrs. Cruthirds, who accompanied her to this new country, and reared an interesting family here. Father's people, including his father, mother, five brothers, and one sister, all came with him and settled in the same community, only one sister being left in South Carolina. They were farmers and mechanics. The long journey from South Carolina was made through the country in wagons, and required six weeks to make the trip. There were no railroads then. They reached Mississippi in the early spring, and struck camp in a great forest of trees, at least three miles from the nearest white settlement. Before they had

time to build a shelter of any kind it began to rain, and continued raining incessantly for three days and nights. They had only their wagon sheets and such other things as could be provided for shelter. No doubt some of them, if not all, had a good case of the blues, if people then were like they are now. The rain finally ceased, the clouds rolled away, and it was but a little while until they had built shelters, then houses, and were soon comfortably quartered in their new home.

My father soon moved to himself; but he cleared land and built houses on two or three places before he settled permanently, and had thus done a great deal of hard, heavy work. When he selected for himself a permanent home, it was but a short while before he had opened a little farm of probably forty acres and built houses needed to begin with. When I try to picture to my mind the old home, I see a large, single log room, without side room or veranda, fronting the road on the north, with the kitchen, with puncheon floor, at least thirty feet to the south; a smokehouse a few feet southeast of this; a barn with stalls for stock, wagon shelters, etc., sixty yards southwest from the other buildings. The spring from which water was brought for all purposes was located at least two hundred yards west from the dwelling. The cleared land was cut up into six- and twelve-acre blocks by cross fences for pasturage as well as other convenient farming purposes. Other improvements had been planned which would have rendered the home much more attractive and comfortable; but father died before these plans could be executed. I have given this description of the old home here that the reader may form some idea of the amount of work required to accom-

plish all this—beginning in the woods, in a heavily timbered country, where there was not a stick amiss, and no one to help but a hired hand, and many other demands on them incident to a home where there was a large family.

When father died, mother was left with seven children to rear—three girls and four boys—and the eldest son only nine years old. Two children had preceded him to the good world, and one followed soon after, thus leaving the seven. I was the youngest, and never saw my father. But as father had been able to gather about him a good supply of stock—such as horses, cattle, hogs, sheep—and other things needed on a farm, mother was able to keep things going for a time, though she had had no experience in outside work; and, too, it seemed that everything worked against her, as will be seen in some future chapters. Father and mother were both Christians, and Methodists, and mother lived to see every child she had reared in her own Church and working for Christ and his cause. I was a preacher eight years before she died. But there were many things to be recorded before the above results of her life and teaching could be accomplished. All this succession of events, frequently full of affliction and disappointment, could never erase from the minds of the older children the influences of the family altar, with its morning and evening devotion, as practiced by my father, or the deep piety of my mother. Still the whole country became greatly demoralized, as will be shown hereafter.

CHAPTER II.

The War.

As may be noted from the dates given in our chapter on "Family and Birth," my father had been dead only five and a half years when the War between the States was declared. Then followed that great strife which left this whole country, especially our beloved Southland, in a state of destitution and ruin. Our fields and orchards were stripped of all fruitage, our horses were taken, our cattle and hogs and other stock were driven off, and many of our homes were plundered and robbed. Thus many—I might say a majority—of our people were left in the most abject poverty, and that, too, when those upon whom we depended most were away from their homes and families, fighting for what they believed to be their rights. There were none who realized more keenly the effects of all this than the widows and orphan children already in the land. Although I was only a small child, from five to nine years old, during this awful struggle, still I can now recall very vividly and painfully some of the sad and trying experiences that came to our home.

Mother had moved along as well as could have been expected, I presume, until these troubles came; but after this it was a great struggle with her all the time to provide for her children. Often there was nothing to sustain life but dry bread, simply made up with clear water, with no seasoning of any sort. If we had salt

for anything, we frequently had to resort to digging up the smokehouse or the old cow lick in the field, and take the dirt thus secured and carry it through a process similar to that of making soap to obtain this necessary commodity. And referring back to the question of bread, it was not unfrequent that the corn of which our bread was made had to be ground in the steel mill. This was a mill that was operated by hand similar to a coffee mill. Many a time I have gone with my mother or sisters to a steel mill owned by a neighbor of ours late in the evenings or early of a morning to thus grind meal for the following day. When it was convenient for us to patronize a larger mill, it was one known as a horse mill run in conjunction with the old gins then in use. It took four horses and two drivers to operate this, and then it was rather a slow process. When our corn was taken to one of these last-named mills, I usually had to carry it on my shoulder, as we had no horse, and my brothers were all hired away from home the greater part of the time after they were old enough to work to help mother in the matter of providing for the family; hence I, being the youngest, was the only dependence at home. I could take only a half bushel of corn to mill at a time, as the distance was from one to two miles, and it must be remembered that I was only a child yet. When my brothers were paid for their work, it came in as a very great help to us; but they were frequently swindled out of their wages or paid off in mere trash.

During the war and before the times already mentioned an incident occurred which I remember well. We had killed four small hogs, which were to serve as our meat supply for the year; and this would require

economy. The meat was put away in a big box in the kitchen end of the house, and the night following some thieves entered and took away every piece of it. They didn't leave us even a meat skin; and so this year had to be passed as some others—without this article of food. About this time a regiment of soldiers passed our way and stripped our orchard, and thus we were left in extreme want. But somehow or other mother managed along so as to keep us living. I have known her to ride all day and until after night to secure bread for herself and children, and then sew until after midnight to make our clothes. But further reference will be made to the question of food and clothing; and we therefore conclude this chapter by saying that the good Lord alone could have brought my poor mother through this trying ordeal. But he has promised to be a Husband to the widow and a Father to the orphan; and so we have found him faithful to his promises.

CHAPTER III.

Other Sources of Supply.

Ours was a wooded country, quite hilly and rough, and the abundance of underbrush afforded a good hiding place for wild animals and game of every description. There was no scarcity of rabbits, squirrels, opossums, and coons, as well as turkeys and deer; and it was an easy task to go out and bring in a good supply of this game at almost any time. Most families were well stocked with a good representation of the canine tribe for rounding in this game, and of this dog family there were some adapted to bringing in one kind of game, and others for other kinds. There were rabbit dogs and opossum dogs and dogs especially suited for the chase (I mean for foxes and deer); and when a dog had been specially trained for any particular line he was scarcely of any value for anything else. Besides the game already mentioned, the woods were full of herds of wild hogs; and as most families had a claim, there must be dogs trained for baying these. Only a very few seemed adapted to this kind of dog business. There was no one at our house who could take much interest in the chase of any kind; but it had fallen to our lot to come in possession of one of these last-named dogs trained for baying wild hogs, and people would send from five to ten miles distant for "Old Drum;" and when the chase was over they would usually, to a limited extent, share their profits with us,

and thus in the economy of providence this old dog was used in helping to bring in a support to our family during this time of need.

I have often wondered how my poor mother ever passed through this stormy period when there was such almost universal destitution and want; but when it is considered that the good Lord can send help through the agency of a dog, it need be no astonishment that we were brought through safely. It will be remembered that God commanded the "ravens"—whatever they were—to bring Elijah "bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening," until the brook had dried up; and then the Lord sent his prophet elsewhere for a support. And when our Saviour wanted to make his triumphal march into Jerusalem, he borrowed an unbroken colt to carry him in, in the midst of the hosannas of the worshiping multitude. In all ages he has chosen such agencies as he would to carry on his work; and thus our good old dog was used. I have thought that if there could be a heaven for the faithful of the brute creation "Old Drum" would certainly have a place there, as he was so faithful in the performance of the duties that seemed to have been assigned him in the economy of providence. Much more might be said as to the manner in which our tables were often supplied with the other kinds of game mentioned; but enough has possibly been written here, except to say that the forests were thus made to yield their possessions to the wants of man in those times of distress.

No mention has been made of the amount of amusement found in rounding in this game for food supply. I can remember when I had grown older that

I frequently went with companies of men and boys in the night chase; and after we had taken two or three fine fat opossums, we would build a fire in the woods and stand around it sometimes for quite a while, telling funny stories or sometimes dissipating in other ways not always profitable or even innocent, having what we called a big time, and finally retire to our homes happy over the results of the trip; and although we frequently proved ourselves very ungrateful by being very sinful, yet we did not fail to enjoy the blessings thus secured in the chase; nor did God withhold his blessings on account of our sins. How wonderful are the mercies of God! "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

We will not take time to refer to the supply of fruits and berries of various kinds often secured by a visit to the fields and forests; but when our minds revert to those times and things, we are reminded of the supply of manna in the wilderness for the hungry Israelites, who only had to reach out their hands for the blessings so abundantly given; and we are taught that God is the same in all ages. He is unchangeable, and hence we may ever trust him if we will only do our part. "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." (Ps. xxxvii. 3.)

CHAPTER IV.

Clothing.

As mere mention was made in a former chapter as to the question of clothing, we deem it proper to devote a short chapter to this subject. People who have grown up since those days can hardly have the faintest idea as to the methods used then by the people in supplying themselves with articles of dress. Every item worn by men, women, or children had to be made at home from the raw cotton.

First, it was often necessary to separate the seed from the lint with the fingers, as there were but few gins then in operation; and then came the carding and spinning. Then the old reel and spools and warping bars were in demand, and all this was quite a lengthy process, requiring much labor.

Next came the dyeing, if different colors were desired, which was no small task itself. I have often spent hours and even whole days hunting paint rocks or gathering sumac berries or other materials used for dyeing purposes; and I have seen the hands of our mothers and sisters stained for several days at a time with the dyes thus prepared for the coloring of clothing.

Then came the weaving and cutting and making into garments—all with the fingers. There were no sewing machines in those days. Every garment worn had to be made from start to finish with the fingers.

But when one of those homespun, home-dyed, home-woven, and homemade suits or garments was completed, it was worn with as much pride as we would now wear clothing made of silks or broadcloth.

Our hats and shoes were also homemade. The leather out of which our shoes were made was dressed at our home tanneries and put together by our own home cobblers; and the hats we wore were mostly made of straw platted by our own hands and put together with needle and thread by our mothers and sisters.

The ladies wore sunbonnets made of the same homespun material above described. The writer can well remember when the first ladies' hats began to be worn after the war.

For men and boys there were homemade white wool hats for winter wear, instead of straw, for those able to buy them. They were usually made by men too old for service in the army, and who had learned this trade and now practiced it for a livelihood.

What has been here written as to clothing supplies during the years described in these chapters was almost universal among the people, as but little could be had from abroad, and hence all had to live alike in this respect, except that the wealthier could have a more abundant supply than the poorer classes, which of course is always understood; but as our home represented the last-named class, we knew intensely what all this meant. It was almost the rule at our house for mother and sisters to sit up and work with all their might until midnight on Saturday nights to have some new garments ready for some member of the family for the Sabbath. But one thing I recall is that

when the hour hand of the clock stood at twelve everything was called off, whether they had finished or not. Mother was a devout Christian, and scrupulously regarded the observance of the Sabbath day. The dear, precious woman set us a good example in this as well as in many other respects, whether we have always tried to emulate her example or not. She who would thus try to fear God and keep his commandments could trust him who feeds the fowls of the air and clothes the grass of the field for food and clothing for herself and children, and she was never disappointed.

CHAPTER V.

Other Work.

As I was the only boy at home from the time I was eight years of age until I was fifteen, it fell to my lot to see that wood was provided for cooking purposes as well as for use in the family room; and inasmuch as we had no wagon and could scarcely ever get any wood hauled, it was necessary most of the time to resort to the woods for it, where it must be put in proper shape to be brought in on our shoulders or in our arms, and thus nearly all the wood burned in our home was prepared. Of course mother and sisters aided me some in this, as I was yet only a child; but most of this work fell to me.

Besides this it was my duty to run all errands for the family, sometimes requiring trips of four or five miles' distance; and when it became necessary for me to be late in the evening reaching home, I was greatly afraid, as many stories had been told me by negroes, as well as white people, about ghosts and wild beasts, with which the country was supposed to be infested. So I was almost afraid of my own shadow at night, and not too brave in daytime, especially if I had to pass a graveyard. Older people sometimes thus scare children with ghost stories and else until they are afraid to go from one room to another at night, and their lives are almost a burden half the time on this account, when, in fact, there is absolutely nothing to hurt or disturb them. All this is very wrong, and should

be avoided persistently by parents and others to whom the care of children is committed. We all ought always to endeavor to make life as sunshiny as possible instead of making it miserable for many, as above indicated.

I remember once I was off on an errand four miles from home; and as there was a great rain during the afternoon, I was so delayed in starting on the return trip homeward that it was night before I had gone halfway, and on descending a long, steep hill into a little dark valley I saw something in the center of the road ahead of me that seemed to have a pair of great flaming eyes staring at me, and there was no way to surround it. The brush was very thick on each side of the road, and if I turned back I had this immense hill to climb the first thing, and I felt sure the beast would catch me at every step; but this seemed to be my only possible escape, and so I was not long measuring the distance between myself and this object of terror by a distance of nearly two miles. I ran until I was almost entirely exhausted, and did not try the trip further that night, and even next morning went another route to reach home, and always felt somewhat afraid of that road thereafter. After I was older I could imagine, since the ghost or beast did not follow me, that it was probably only a collection of water in the road in the little valley before me and the two eyes that I seemed to have seen were probably only the reflection of two bright stars in the clear skies above. But be this as it might, I had had all my fright and trouble just the same. I might relate some other incidents of this kind, but think it would hardly be profitable, and therefore desist.

Added to the home work already recorded I was expected when at home on wash days to assist my sisters in this line of work, and often used the old battling stick vigorously from early morn till noon, or did any other work that might be mapped out for me by those who were older, as such was my only work, except a few scattering days of chopping out cotton for our neighbors or working in the garden or potato patch until I was old enough to be hired out for wages to work on the farm, of which a full account will be given hereafter.

CHAPTER VI.

Corn-Shuckings and Quiltings.

When the crops were being gathered in the fall, the corn was thrown into great heaps in the lot or near the barn, sometimes two or three hundred bushels in a heap, and at the bottom of this and as near the center as possible a jug of whisky was placed. The jug was usually large enough to contain one or two gallons. This was intended as a treat for the workers when the job was completed. Of course it can be seen at once that the corn would have to be shucked before the treat could be secured. When those invited were at the place, and after they had worked awhile, a big-mouthed negro who could sing well was placed on the corn pile to sing and hollo. They had songs suited to the occasion; and when this negro leader would give the main line all the others, white and black, would join in the chorus, and fairly make the corn and shucks fly until the work was done. Then came the treat. By this time the women would have finished their work on the quilt, and all this was followed by a good supper, such as usually given at log-rollings and other workings. When this was over and everything cleared away, or if there was plenty of room before the supper was finished, the music would start, and then for an all-night dance, with a play party for the younger ones in another room, and usually the play party was equally as demoralizing as the dance.

Of course there were many such parties in those days along through the year, and especially during the winter season, when there was no public working. They were all run in about the same way. While there was not usually the public treat with whisky as at the corn-shuckings, still there was then, as there is now, always whisky on hand at these public dances. This seems to be part of the programme, and will doubtless ever continue so.

CHAPTER VII.

Some Tragedies.

Along with the things of which mention has been made in the preceding chapters there occurred some things in our community of a very different character, and such, too, as would leave a lasting impression, especially on a young mind.

There were several deserters from the Confederate army in the neighborhood, who, I suppose, spent most of their time in the woods, hiding from the officers. During this time a number of depredations were committed in the community and surrounding country, such as the burning of ginhouses, schoolhouses, and other public buildings, and shooting into homes. One child was killed, and an old man shot at from his gate. The deserters mentioned above were accused of all these crimes, and a number of citizens organized themselves into a company of self-constituted conscripters, and sifted the country for those supposed criminals, pretending that they had been deputized to take them, if they could be found, and send them back to their command. But as many as could be found were taken and brutally killed. I now recall the names of Elias Bounds, Fleet Smith, Lon Shepard, and others who were thus taken and murdered. The last-named was taken from his bed with a burning fever and, having one end of a rope fastened to him and the other end tied to the horn of the saddle

occupied by one of the conscripters, was made to keep up with the horses as they loped off until they were far enough from the house to be out of sight; then he was loosed from the saddle, tied to a tree, and given a moment to pray if he chose. When he became "too loud" with his prayers, as they said, they cursed him and filled him with bullets, then threw his body in a hollow and covered it with dirt. His friends recovered the body and gave it a decent burial. I attended the funeral, saw the bullet holes in his face, and was greatly moved by the cries and tears of his widow and orphan children thus left without a support.

One other case is worthy of mention. A young man, or rather boy, seventeen years old, one of our nearest neighbor boys, was accused of having been seen with those deserters, who were supposed to have been guilty of the burnings and other crimes mentioned, and was taken. I remember well when he and his captors passed our house, although I was then hardly nine years old. There was probably a company of fifteen or twenty of them, all on horseback, while the young man was walking in front of them. He remarked to my mother as he passed the gate: "Pretty good escort I have." They took him to our church, where he was guarded that night. It was Saturday night, and the next day, Sunday, they took him down to the river, two miles away, carved him up most brutally until he was dead, tied a rock to his neck, put him in the river, and left him there. Two days later his relatives and friends fished his body out, took it to the family burying ground, and laid it to rest.

Several other things almost as shocking were perpetrated by this mob, which will give the reader a

deeper insight into the times in which we lived. Some who took part in these things were Church people. But this can be understod when it is considered that the whole country was in a turmoil. It is not pleasant to write these things, but they will give the reader some idea of the contrast between things then and now. There are people who seem to think that the world is growing worse, but this writer does not see it thus. More light will be given in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

Whisky and Debauchery.

The presence everywhere of the crossroads whisky shop added very greatly to the perpetration and perpetuation of such evils as have been related in our former chapters, as well as many other wrongs not yet mentioned. It was not necessary to go any great distance to find one of these manufactories of drunkards, and on rainy days and Saturdays there could always be found a crowd of men and boys gathered at these places, where card-playing was one chief attraction or source of amusement. They would play for the drinks, doing so until many were well drunk, and this included boys in their early teens. I know whereof I write. Then this would often end in a big row. Friends would fall out and fight, very frequently pistols were used with great freedom on these occasions, and often men would be taken to their families dead or wounded for life.

I have been at our country village when men inflamed with "bust-skull" whisky would fall out with their best friends, and a row would ensue, which would continue until the whole hill would be astir with men ready to take each other's lives—all, too, about some trivial matter. It was the red whisky doing all this mischief. Such scenes were frequent on occasions of horse-racing (for it must not be forgotten that this was also an age of horse-racing), when, as is always the case, much gambling was carried on.

During certain seasons nearly every Saturday was spent at the race tracks. I was never at but one horse race, as luck would have it; but I remember well that it looked as though the whole country had turned out to the races that day, and our attention was called to the fact that Church members were holding the stakes for the races and many other Church people were present to witness them. In fact, I was then a member of the Church myself; but thus things went in those days.

It might be supposed from what has been written that the wickedness was all perpetrated by the men; but this was not the case. In many quarters there was great degradation among those of the other sex. Such times as have been described could not fail to produce evil effects among the women; and hence much might be written on this line, but I forbear. Suffice it to say that it could not have been much worse than it was in many places. Of course there were good and pure people among both sexes then as now; but there was, on the other hand, much sin and vice. There were veritable dens of iniquity then as now—easy, too, to be found. Hence our conclusion again is that the world is not growing worse, but better. The only difference is that then many such things were practiced almost openly and were hardly known in the neighboring community, whereas now a little crime of to-day is made known around the world to-morrow by means of the press.

In my next chapter I will notice some of the tendencies of these evils in my own life.

CHAPTER IX.

First Year from Home.

It has probably been noted already from what has been written that nearly all the influence brought to bear on my life up to this time, to any great extent at least, had been from our own home circle, and hence there had been but little variation any way; and the influences of our home were only for good, so far as mother's efforts could make it. She was decidedly a Christian, and always tried to lead her children in this way. To this end our home was guarded from the evils common in this age, such as the dance and its kindred evils. But the time had now come when I must go from home, although I was only eleven years old.

I was hired to work on the farm at eight dollars a month, and was here associated with free negroes and obscene and profane white men and boys. It is doubtful whether I could have found a worse class than was to be found on this farm or circumstances more unfavorable to piety or even good morals. Exactly the reverse was prevalent everywhere and witnessed on every hand. As has already been intimated, the most profane and obscene language possible was indulged in, and drunkenness and debauchery was common among them—all of which was exceedingly demoralizing to one unaccustomed to such things. Fortunately for me, however, I was not kept there, first and last, more than six months; and the remainder of

this year I was very differently surrounded. In this way these evil influences were for the time averted; and as I then had another year at home, together with the influence of the Sunday school, I was not at this time contaminated by these things so much as I would have been had it been necessary for me to remain under such influences any great length of time.

Religion, however, was at a very low ebb in the country at this time, even among the better class of people. The war had left its impress on the morals of the country everywhere, as well as its other disastrous effects. While we had churches scattered through the country, and preachers of the old type (as good men as ever lived, some of them at least, who would hold two days' meetings, and these sometimes protracted for several days more), still there was so much political strife, with so many other adverse influences to hinder the work, that but little could be accomplished. Hence there were very few people in our community who made any pretensions to religion. Very few of the men belonged to any Church at all, even among the older ones, and those who did were only nominal members. There were only two men, both of whom were on the old list, who could be called religious, and only one of them strictly so, and this embraced a radius of three or four miles; while, on the other hand, sin seemed to reign everywhere.

Such was the condition of society at that time as I now remember it; but more of this in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

Second Year Away from Home.

I made brief mention in a former chapter of the wild associations of my first year as a hired hand on the farm; though the half could never be told. In fact, it would not do to go into details at this point. I will, however, write of some of the particulars of my second year thus spent.

I was hired to a physician to cultivate a small crop for him, receiving such assistance as might be found necessary from time to time. The doctor had lost his wife the preceding year, and hence his family at this time consisted of himself, three sons, and the colored cook. The doctor was himself a perfect gentleman in every sense of the word, though not a Christian; but the boys were very dissipated. They were wicked in almost every way that could have been mentioned at the time of which I write. Their home was located in the country village of which mention has already been made, and they contributed much in giving the community the character it bore. They were regarded as of the "upper ten" class of society from a worldly standpoint, owing to the comparative wealth of their father; but they were desperately wicked, and their associates were of the same dissipated class. They went in and out at will in their home; and when it is remembered that there was no lady there to give her influence for good, and the father frequently away in his profession-

al work, it will be easy for one to draw a picture of their home in his imagination. Even the colored people associated with the premises were of the most degraded class.

The writer and the youngest of these three brothers, being about the same age, became great chums. I learned to love him with a love almost equal to that of a woman, and hence he could have led me at will into any sort of place of sin; and by this time I was not hard to lead. On one occasion we caught an old horse in the field, put a rope headstall on him as a substitute for a bridle, used the top of a quilt as a blanket, and, without a saddle, doubled on one horse, rode to our county seat, and put up for the night at the home of Judge Roane. My young friend and companion had supplied us with some alcohol from his father's drug store, and on reaching town had purchased an additional bottle of whisky, and thus we were prepared to go most anywhere for the night. Next morning (Sunday) he added to our stock a bottle of peach brandy, and we started on our return trip home, taking occasion to make his grandmother a visit on the way. I can never forget how when we were invited to the dining table in the basement, it being necessary to descend a flight of steps to reach the table, my friend staggered at the top step and kept falling until he lay his full length on the floor in the dining room. He did not join us at the table, but with some assistance found another room, where he remained for a nap. It was the mixture of the whisky, alcohol, and peach brandy that did this work. We continued our return trip home in the afternoon, turned the horse back on the grass in the old field, threw the quilt top

away, and hid the rope headstall, so that no one at home ever knew where we had been. This was the only time in life that I ever became really intoxicated, although I was at other times under the influence of strong drink; and all this when I was yet only fourteen years old.

Again, this same boy and I walked to the county seat and back, a distance of twelve miles, by dinner, and were near enough to hear the dinner horn and put in our appearance for the midday meal as though we had been at work in the field; and no one ever knew to the contrary. This time again we went after whisky. My young friend always furnished the money, as he was in a position to do this.

On another occasion we planned to leave home and go to New Orleans and offer ourselves for work in stores. We were willing to do anything in such a place to get a raise; and so we made all our arrangements to start on Saturday evening. We could make our plans work without suspicion on that day better than any other, as it was my custom to visit home on that day and spend the Sabbath with mother and sisters, and my friend frequently spent Saturday nights from home. So it was most convenient for us to get away on this night. We had informed the colored cook of our plans. She seemed to take an interest in helping us off, prepared our clothes, fixed us a lunch to eat on the way, and had everything in readiness for us. When the hour came, my comrade went to the family merchant with a forged order from his father, secured a loan of forty dollars (eight five-dollar bills), and we were in the back door ready to start when the eldest brother of the other boy and a cousin of his rode up

on the side we were starting from and so frightened us by their presence that we abandoned the whole project in less time than it takes to tell it. The boy carried the money back to the merchant, informed him that his father had found that he would not need it, and so this was never made known to any one further. Thus we escaped what might have been the worst for us.

Many other similar incidents might be related as to the affairs of this year and its associations; but enough has been written to show the tendencies of the times. I suppose I might have told how these boys formulated plans by which they could secure brandy from a Mr. Covington, who had a fine large orchard and made much brandy to use and give away to his neighbors and friends when it was needed in sickness. He would not sell it at all; but when there was occasion for using it in sickness, he seemed glad to let his friends have it; so the boys would go and represent some one as being sick and get brandy until the old gentleman discovered their scheme and would not let them have any more. They sent me once to represent that Henry Kilgore, my cousin, had been snake-bitten and needed some brandy. I was soon in possession of a bottle of this, and we thought we were having great fun; but on my second visit on a similar errand the old gentleman said the snakes were getting too bad, and I didn't linger a moment to argue the question with him. But afterwards I met him and he asked me who put me up to this. I was glad when he left our country for California, as I always dreaded to meet him after this, although he was a very fine old gentleman and had an elegant family.

But enough has been said on this line, and so we will

turn to the other side for a time and notice some movements and influences for reformation in our own lives and in the history of the community. I am glad to record here before closing this chapter that at least one of the sons of the physician to whom reference has been made reformed his life later, became an earnest Christian, joined the Methodist Church, and lived a consistent life for a number of years. He reared an interesting family, was honored with public office for a term of years in the county in which he lived, and finally died in the faith and went to his reward in heaven, as we have all reason to believe. The others I have lost sight of, but hope they, too, have changed their lives and will meet their mother in the good world.

CHAPTER XI.

VACILLATIONS.

DURING all these years—from the time I was old enough to begin to get out from home, even on errands for my mother; but more particularly after I first left home to work as a hired hand on the farm, which was, as will be remembered, when I was only eleven years old—there seemed to have been a sort of vagrancy about my life when I was not regularly employed, wandering from place to place in an aimless way. While my mother was a deeply pious woman, and did what she could in the way of influence at least, yet she was quite indulgent. I suppose she didn't draw the reins as tightly as she ought; and hence this habit of going somewhat at will and staying too long at a place when sent on business rather grew on me until there may have seemed danger, as my friends saw things, that I would live this sort of a life all through; and I can imagine now that I was sometimes at places where I was not specially wanted, although I was almost always treated with the greatest kindness. I think I had one redeeming trait, and that was perfect willingness and readiness to do whatever I was asked to do wherever I happened to be. This, I suppose, helped me along very much during these days of apparent vagrancy.

In fact, there seemed to be a sort of double-mindedness about me anyway, and sometimes the evil would get the better of me, while at other times the good

would predominate. I suppose I might have found an illustration of my life as then lived in the story of the gentleman who had a young dog given him. He put the dog in a sack and started home with it; but when he called at a house to see another gentleman on some business and left the sack in the hall with the dog in it, the boys of the home, to have some fun, slipped his dog out and put their pet pig in the sack in its stead. So when the man went to show his neighbor his fine young dog before starting home, on opening the sack the pig came out. Of course he was surprised and disappointed; but he put the pig back, thinking to take it on home anyway. While he was arranging some other matters before starting the boys took their pig out and replaced his pup in the sack. So when he reached home and went to turn the pig out it was a pup; and the gentleman declared he didn't know whether he had a pig or a pup. So it was with my life. I had good desires and good aspirations and would form good resolutions all the way; but these were not always carried out. I wonder if other people have had experiences like this. I am afraid so, judging from their lives. But God's Word teaches us that a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, and that such a one need not expect anything from the Lord.

I have already mentioned the kind treatment I usually received where I chanced to go; but the reader must not conclude that this was always the case, as I was driven away from homes as many as a half dozen times or more with great vehemence; but as I was only a little orphan boy, there was a possibility of outliving all these things; and so I need not despair. I am glad to record here that those same people who became

impatient with me then lived to see me an honored minister of the Lord Jesus, and afterwards gave me frequent invitations to their homes and treated me with great consideration. So one need not become despondent in the evil days.

It seemed a great misfortune that I had no father to order my movements and control my time. But as we cannot see the end from the beginning, as can the One whose we are and whom we serve, it was possibly best that I had to grow up as I did. One thing I remember well: when I was alone I built many air castles. Sometimes I would imagine myself very rich, and I would embark on the commercial seas with large storehouses of goods, scores of clerks, and a constantly increasing business, when, in fact, I was very poor and destined to remain so, so far as this world's goods are concerned. It is well, I suppose, for one to imagine himself rich occasionally, although his hopes may never materialize. At other times I would imagine myself a practicing physician, always successful, never losing a case; and so on through all the professions and avocations of life. Most frequently, however, I would imagine myself a preacher, always with large congregations before me. I would preach, call penitents, and witness wonders. It was an easy matter, you know, to preach to the bushes and have success; but it only remained for me to learn that these were only air castles, and must crumble to pieces before the approaching realities of life. I am glad and thankful to the good Lord, however, for the measure of success he has given me in the work I have tried to do for him, and for my repeated failures when I have trusted in the least in my own strength. The success that has crowned the work when I have relied wholly

on him has taught me experimentally that, while the ministry may plant and the Church may water, it is God who giveth the increase. I have sure enough been in the ministry more than a quarter of a century, and for all that has been accomplished through me I want to ascribe praise to his name.

NOTE.—It will be evident to the reader that I am trying to make these chapters short; and yet I hope I may escape the embarrassment that came to the young man through his marriage contract. He had met and admired a young lady, and this admiration had ripened into love, until the time came when he thought he should make known to her his intentions; and so he asked her if she would consent to be his wife, when she replied: "No, indeed! I'll never consent to settle down in a corner to mend clothes for one man." Upon this he promised her if she would marry him he would never require this of her. She finally consented, and they were made one. Soon afterwards the young man purchased a new pair of trousers; and although he had secured his number, he found when he tried them on that they were four inches too long. They fit him every other way, however, and he thought this could be easily remedied; and although he remembered his promise, he took them to his young wife and asked her if she would not cut them off the proper length for him. She replied: "No; never. You said you would not ask me to do such things, and I will not commence it." He then carried them to his sister, and asked her to do the work for him. She said: "No; your wife can do it as well as I can." Then he turned to his mother, feeling sure he would not be denied; but he

was again disappointed, as she told him it was now the duty of his wife to do such things for him. So, being disappointed at every turn, he hung them in the closet and went about his work. After he had gone his young wife reconsidered the matter, and, taking the pants down from the closet, cut off the four inches, fixed them nicely, and hung them back in their place. Then the sister, not knowing what had been done, did likewise; and then the mother, considering how good her son had always been, did the same thing. And so when he took them from the closet again, he found that, although he was a married man, they had prepared for him to go back into "knee pants." Now, while I wish to condense as much as possible in writing the story of my life, still I hope I may avoid too much trimming, as my chief desire in it all is to bring the greatest possible good to the reader for time and eternity.

CHAPTER XII.

Temperance Movement.

During the year following the things related in the last chapter the "United Friends of Temperance Society" had its run in sections of Mississippi. An organization was effected in our community, and more than two hundred took the pledge. It would hardly be possible for the people of a neighborhood to become more enthused in any work than ours did in this. During its progress among us a petition to the Legislature was circulated asking for the passage of a bill prohibiting the sale of intoxicants within five miles of our post office, which was effected; and hence the saloon, with its accompanying evils, was removed from us. I am glad to say now, after thirty years have come and gone, that there has never been another whisky shop within the radius of that five miles, so far as I know. And while some old topers continued to drink, ordering their whisky from other places, there were a great many younger people, white as well as colored, who did not go to those distant stands for it. Hence reformation began to be evident in a goodly number of cases; and just in the wake of this temperance movement a revival influence began, many were gathered into the Churches, and a wave of good started that will doubtless be continued until the rounding up of all things.

In the light of these historical facts I have always

been ready to encourage any movement intended for the suppression of vice of any description. While such a movement itself may seem short-lived, as in the above instance, its effects will still remain for the betterment of the world. It was during this wave of revival influence that this writer and a number of his schoolmates surrendered their young hearts and lives to Christ; and although there were some serious backslidings after this, still those influences and the vows that were made here have never been forgotten or entirely abandoned. On the contrary, they linger as among the most sacred recollections of our lives, and will doubtless be treasured up in eternity.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Sunday School.

During all these years the Sunday school had had an existence, being patronized, however, by a very small element, but counteracting to a very limited extent for the time the evil influences of the outside world. Its own influence was greatly paralyzed, however, by having to go into winter quarters every year for lack of comfortable houses, thus losing the very time when worldliness, including the dance and other such revelries, was most prevalent. But even the revival of the Sunday school work in the summer time had its effects for good, as seed was thus being sown in the hearts and lives of the children of the community that would germinate in after years and bring fruit to the glory of God and the good of the Church.

It was my privilege to attend one of these schools during the months of its existence for two or three consecutive years, and here I committed to memory many passages and even whole chapters from the word of God, although I was not yet a Christian. (This was before the revival came in which many of us joined the Church.) I remember one Sunday the superintendent told us if we would commit to memory five verses from the New Testament for the next Sabbath he would give us a red ticket, and for every five red tickets thus secured we would get a blue one, and for every five blue ones we should have a "pretty ticket." Thus it will

be seen that it would take one hundred and twenty-five verses to secure one of those "pretty tickets," while by this time we would have twenty-five of the red tickets and five of the blue ones. I went home and began in great earnestness, intending, if possible, to commit the entire New Testament to memory during that school. I began with the second chapter of Matthew. I would have begun with the first, but couldn't pronounce those hard old names. But I did memorize the second and third chapters, and could repeat them perfectly when the day came. There was only one other in the school who had committed so many, and that was a girl. She had selected the same chapters I had, and neither of us knew the other was learning them; and she was my sweetheart. I thought then that we surely would marry because she had selected the same chapters I had. Well, we really did get into a race committing the scriptures to memory, and sometimes she was ahead of me, while at other times I was in advance; and thus the work went on until, having two weeks to run on, we brought up for one Sunday nearly five hundred verses each. Of course we would not have time to repeat so many at the Sunday school; still we had them ready.

See how the memory can be cultivated. We might know the Bible by heart, especially the New Testament, and yet there are numbers of people who cannot quote a promise to a penitent sinner, but must stand with mouth closed in the midst of golden opportunities for doing good, as if there were no help. I must say now that these Sunday school lessons and influences left a lasting impression on my young life; and I gathered up gravel stones from the bottom of the bed of the river of life during that school that I have

been able to scatter among the people since; and this word has been made the power of God unto salvation to many who have believed. May this great institution of the Church prosper a thousandfold more and yet bring blessings to tens of thousands of the sons and daughters of our race!

CHAPTER XIV.

The Camp Meeting.

It was during my second year's association with the Sunday school that a camp meeting enterprise was on foot in our country. Brother Mitchell was our preacher, and he began talking camp meeting soon after coming to the work, and kept it up until a sufficient number of people had been pledged to tent on the grounds to justify the announcement of the meeting. The first week in September was the time selected. Mother was among the tenters, and we moved to the camp on Saturday morning, reaching there early. Quite a large number of ministers had been secured as help, and they, as they usually do on such occasions, had four sermons each day, besides an early prayer service answering for morning family worship. I had never seen it in this fashion before. Penitents were invited at the close of every service; and there were many seekers, and large numbers were saved. I went forward for prayers, I suppose, at nearly every service until on Monday evening, at a grove prayer meeting conducted by Rev. Ben H. Bounds, I was happily converted, and that night at the close of the service I was received into the Church by Rev. Amos Kendall, who was at the time presiding elder of the district.

The sermons preached and the songs sung at that camp meeting were such as would naturally leave a lasting impression on the minds and hearts of those

who witnessed them, especially those who had never attended camp meetings before. Backed up by the influence of the temperance movement and the Sunday school work and the vows we had made, I for one went away from the camp ground when the meeting was over thoroughly committed in my convictions and resolutions to the work of the Lord; but there yet remained some lessons for me to learn that I knew not of as yet. But while I learned later that I must still witness the prevalence of sin in many quarters and sometimes inconsistencies on the part of professed Christians, and while it remained for me to experience in my own life some painful backslidings, still these camp meeting occasions left a divine flavor in my life that I hope I shall never live long enough to forget.

The recollection of those times almost makes one want to live his life over again. It seems that we can never again have such grand congregational singing as was practiced and enjoyed then. But still there are many, many good things now that we didn't have then; and so I suppose these new institutions of the Church will probably more than balance with the things that are gone. We shall live on and work on at least until we meet with those of other days "in the sweet by and by."

CHAPTER XV.

An Incident.

It will probably be remembered that at the time of the camp meeting described above the writer was only fourteen years of age, and therefore entirely subject to my mother's directions as to preparation for such occasions. For this time she had made me a nice linen suit. This material was extensively used for children's wear, it being much less expensive than goods of a heavier texture, and the question of economy was necessarily a matter of consideration with us. This new linen suit was very highly appreciated by its owner; however, while it was a wonderful improvement in style on the old purple-dyed homespun we had been accustomed to wearing, and while I was proud of the new clothes, there was another thing in my possession of which I was much more vainly proud than of the clothes. I had in some way from somewhere (I do not just remember how) come into possession of a watch chain. I am sure it was brass, for my only recollection concerning it is that it cost only twenty-five cents. But I placed it in my vest buttonhole and hitched the other end to my vest pocket. I had no watch, and as I moved about on the camp ground I imagined that every one who came near me would see and admire my chain.

As I have already told the reader, under the burning words of the men of God in their sermons I had gone

forward for prayer at nearly every call for penitents; and while I was under conviction and really wanted to be saved, even in the midst of my most earnest pleas for pardon this watch chain would get before me and get tangled up in my prayers, so that while others were being saved on my right hand and on my left, and the people praising God all around me, still I was only the more miserable, until finally on Monday afternoon during the altar service I decided that this watch chain was in my way. So I loosed it from my vest and slipped it down in the straw in the altar under me, and never saw it again. Almost immediately this service was closed and the usual grove meetings announced, one for the men and another for the women in different directions from the camp. I went with a number of other penitents to the men's meeting, and the first prayer was not over before God for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins, and I returned to my mother's tent praising God. Thus I was taught, as I believe, that a very small and apparently insignificant thing can be a great hindrance to one who is seeking salvation.

The merchantman of the New Testament who was seeking goodly pearls sold all he had before he could buy the pearl of great price. A ballroom dress or an approaching dance or a game of cards has kept many a person from this greatest of blessings. Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, and Judas sold his Master for a few pieces of silver. But these both found occasion to repent bitterly for their rash acts, and so has it ever been. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." What may

seem to be a trifle may keep one out of the kingdom of Christ here, and whatever will bar the kingdom against an individual here will keep him out of heaven when he dies. So we should not "despise the day of small things."

CHAPTER XVI.

Backsliding.

After my conversion I ran well for a season. I had no inclination whatever to return to my former way of living; but, on the other hand, was fully resolved to live a good and useful life. And I believe till yet that if the Church had given me work to do, I would have been saved much trouble and loss during the months that followed; but as I was offered no work to do in the Church, the devil soon found employment for me. My sister was a young lady, not yet a member of the Church, and was invited to a party. That is what we called them then. They have new names for them now, however, the most recent of which is "cake walk." But we called them "parties." It was New Year's day; I shall never forget it. Sister had other company, but I decided I would go too. Here I made a great mistake. It would have been better if I had gone to prayer meeting or else remained at home. Anyway the devil set a trap for me that night. He knows the weaker points in our character, and has been occupied more than six thousand years forming plans and devising schemes by which he hopes to yet ruin our influence and wreck our souls. He will never lose an opportunity to effect this diabolical purpose if possible; and so he had things arranged for me that night. There were eighteen young ladies and girls present who would dance, and only five young gentle-

men, counting myself, and I was a mere kid. I say "kid" here, for I was then among the devil's goats. According to the old régime, it took a definite number to make a set, and one had to give us the music. There remained just the number to complete the set if I would take part.

The girls asked me if I would dance. I told them I was a member of the Church. They said it was no harm to dance; but I insisted that I was a member of the Church, and then two girls danced together to make up the set. They looked very awkward, and I believe they felt that way. They kept looking at me anyway, and I kept looking at them. After a while they asked me to just come out and walk around with them. They said it would not be wrong to walk around, and it really didn't look like there could be any harm in simply walking around. It was a great temptation, especially as my best girl was among the dancers, and I yielded to their entreaties and went out just to walk around. I had hardly reached the floor before something seemed to say: "Now you've fixed it, haven't you? You have forfeited your vows and brought a reproach on the Church. You promised in the presence of God and the congregation to 'renounce the devil and all his works,' etc.; and now here you are mixed up with a Godless, Christless set, who care nothing for you or your Church in a religious sense, and will laugh at you for your inconsistencies when the occasion is over." And so I was robbed of my good conscience in an instant, and was persuaded in my own mind that the people would have no confidence in me as a Christian any longer anyway, and hence I had as well go on and have a good time; and so on I went

for many weeks, traveling all the gaits in the way of sin until I was well-nigh ruined. I soon learned to call the set for them, and was a leader in the dance, and also learned to play cards and gamble on a small scale, and many other things of vice; but my career in this way was brief comparatively, as I was soon restored while yet in my teens, and then began sure enough to work for Christ.

I have always regretted those times of evil, as they left an ugly scar on my life. Sin is like a snowball in one particular: it increases as it goes. It might be checked at first by a very small obstruction, but later rushes on over bushes and else until in the form of a mighty avalanche it will bury the city and leave death and destruction in its wake. The first game of cards I learned to play was a game of "smut," but it was not long until I had learned to play "seven-up" and "euchre" and the other games practiced or indulged in during those days; and I indulged in such things until I was reclaimed, since which time I have not ceased to warn others of these dangers.

CHAPTER XVII.

Reclamation.

During the months of my wandering from God as a backslider I became profane. I am even now very sorry I ever learned to use bad language. It is so ugly and leaves such a scar on one's life, and it is so wrong to take the name of the Lord in vain; but when one starts on the wrong road there is no telling where the end will be. I had gone on in this way until one day I was plowing in some rather rough land, and my horse seemed more contrary and harder to manage than I had ever seen him before. Bad people sometimes make bad horses; but at this time I thought the horse was all to blame. So I found myself saying a whole lot of bad words to him, when all at once I seemed to have come to myself. The Holy Spirit arrested me, and I began to ask myself the question as to what good could be accomplished in any way by the use of this bad language. It could not benefit the horse, and was evidently hurtful to me, and I stood still between my plow handles until I had fully resolved never to take the Lord's name in vain again; and by his grace I never have unto this day.

But I had no sooner formed this resolution than those other things of which I had been guilty came trooping up before my mind, with the question: "What are you going to do with these?" Hardly an hour had passed before I had resolved to quit them all and begin

from that day to live a better life. But I felt so weak, and could not dismiss from my mind the fact that I had started once, and that, too, in a more public way, and had made such a woeful failure that it seemed impossible at times for me to ever keep these vows I was then making. But the more I thought of these things the more determined I became to make this another earnest effort at least; and so that night I went to the old china berry tree in our yard, standing near the corner of the office where I slept, and, kneeling among its sprangled roots, I poured out my soul to God in prayer for help. Thus I continued every night for more than three weeks; and while the Lord did not restore to me the "joys of his salvation" then, still I did feel greatly strengthened against temptation.

No doubt if my precious mother had known that I was kneeling in prayer at that old tree she would have come to my assistance; but this was not made known to any one but God. Besides this, I had resolved never to make known my convictions again until I could be fully reclaimed and live a good life for a while. I was going to serve God on the sly. I never intended to approach another public altar for prayer. But God did not bless me thus, for this was not "his way." I had sinned publicly and should confess publicly; and as the days and weeks passed I became more miserable. When the protracted meeting at our church began, I was among the first at the altar on Saturday morning, responding to the first call for penitents. In fact, the minister in his sermon seemed to have understood my case, and his words seemed to have been directed to me pointedly. I was under awful conviction, and everything seemed to condemn me; and so I continued at every service,

going forward at every call and thinking of little else until the following Monday night, when, amid the shouts of praise and loud, glad hallelujahs on the part of others who were being saved, I resolved that, feeling or no feeling, blessing or no blessing (I wasn't worthy to be blessed anyway; I was only worthy of death as I felt), from that time on I would serve God anyway, and if he let me die and go to hell I would serve him and go down praying for salvation and trying to do his will. I had no more than reached this conclusion when the burden was gone and a sweet peace came to my soul, such as I had not felt for many months.

There had been no special difficulty about my trusting God; but I was afraid he wouldn't trust me. The unconverted man or woman doesn't know how to trust God for pardon; but the backslider is afraid God won't trust him again. This had been my trouble. But here I realized the full pardon of all past offenses, and was more than ever resolved to "never turn back any more." They did not make any further propositions that night or give an opportunity for any one to unite with the Church; hence I went to our class leader next morning and asked him if my name was still on the Church roll. I knew it ought not to have been there all this time; but as there had been no notice given of a Church trial, I didn't know how the case stood, and I intended to join again at once if my name was off. When they informed me that my name was still on the class book I was glad, and told them to let it remain there forever.

Soon after this to some of my friends I expressed a willingness to work if called on, and was soon called

on to pray in public, which I tried to do. I have ever since been trying to do what I could; but as to further preparation for work and the developments that must necessarily be made in order to a life of usefulness much will be written hereafter. But in my case I had found God, and had again fully verified his promise: "Return unto me, and I will return unto you;" "Draw nigh unto me, and I will draw nigh unto you."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Escape from Ruin.

Soon after my recovery from this lapse into sin circumstances led me to make an effort to save one of my lifelong friends. Although he was older than myself, I was old enough to remember him before he was grown. He was a noble boy, every inch a gentleman, and a model for other boys in his general deportment before men. I had heard my own mother express a hope that her boys would be as true and manly as she considered this young man. His father was a minister of the gospel, but had gone to his reward in heaven. I saw the father die.

> "I heard the parting pilgrim tell,
> While crossing Jordan's stormy river,
> 'Adieu to earth, for all is well;
> Now all is well with me forever.'"

He left this son a nice little home, some stock, some money, and a good name.

But I knew the boy later when he had no home; I knew him when he had no stock, his money was all gone, and he was denied credit by those who had helped to ruin him; I knew him when his poor old widowed mother was going with her gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. I have seen her weep as though her heart would break as she would relate to my mother and others the sad story of the downfall of this once noble

boy. I have gone and with my own hands chopped wood for this poor old woman while her prodigal son was away from home on protracted sprees of dissipation, and sometimes with a lighted torch I would go into the dark woods at a late hour at night to search for this dissipated son to try to comfort his poor mother. I knew him when, later still, the little woman to whom he had plighted his faith at the altar had lost the flush from her cheeks and was compelled to live in want, and when the little children God had given him would work up and down the long cotton rows of Mississippi, looking to the time when the sale of their produce could be made, and thus new clothes could be secured, and when Santa Claus might come and bring them good cheer. But more than once I have known that dissipated father to go off on sprees of drunkenness and spend the earnings of those poor, hard-worked children; so that no new clothes could be bought nor would Santa Claus visit their home. I have a hundred times sympathized with those poor children.

Hence it was after one of his protracted sprees that I addressed him as we sat together on the old sill in his mother's yard and asked him if for the sake of his poor old mother, for the sake of his noble wife, for the sake of his sweet children, and especially for his own sake he could not and would not assert his moral manhood and leave off his old habits. I can never forget the scene that followed. He buried his face in his hands and wept and wept and wept, and finally said: "O God, if I could! But I have murdered my will power, I have murdered my manhood, and murdered my soul." But back of this, while he yet had money, and before all had been squandered, I had heard him say

to his mother, when she would plead with him not to leave her and act in that way, with profanity: "My money is my own; I will spend it as I please." And now here was the poor fellow without money and a slave to habit. And as he continued speaking, while we sat on the old sill, he said to me: "Tell them I got my start hellward in the mixed dance. Here I learned to associate with bad company, and was led into sins that I would not now mention." When I heard him say these things with so much feeling, I could not but see how narrowly I myself had escaped ruin.

Later still I was called into a home where a young man was dying without hope; and as I was trying to point him to Christ he told me how when his mother and sisters tried to persuade him to go with them to the revival meeting, where special efforts were being made to save people, he tore away from them and went to the dance, and that the good Spirit had left him entirely. He died cursing his best friends and cursing his own soul.

Again, I went with a minister in one of the Western States to visit a dying woman. She was a young widow, and quite attractive. God had given her two bright, sweet little girls; but her own life had been wrecked. She was as vile as vile could be. Still, she had sent for the minister, and as we sat at her bedside and tried to lead her back to the Saviour she declared herself lost, and said: "The dance did it."

Thus we have learned from observation as well as experience that we must guard the little things of life as well as the greater ones, if we would be finally saved.

Since I have been engaged in the work of the ministry I have received from the wives and mothers of poor

drunkards letters that would, if possible, have made the angels weep, and sometimes appeals from the poor victims themselves. I was conducting a meeting in St. Louis, Mo., when that millionaire wife murderer came home inflamed with strong drink and in a fit of passion killed his own bright little boy, left his pretty wife dead on the carpet, went out and down the street a raving maniac, and for this awful crime was hanged until he was dead, dead, dead—all the result of indulging in this habit of drink. From all these and many other such things I have been made to feel more and more grateful that I parted company with such things at an early age and began to try to lead a new and better life.

CHAPTER XIX.

Call to Preach.

Among my earliest impressions when a child as I now recall them I seemed instinctively to have a desire to preach the gospel, even before I remember to have heard any preaching myself, and as I grew older and saw and heard more, this desire increased. It seemed to have been born of God, born from above. Almost by the time I could talk, I suppose, I learned to sing, and as far back as I can recollect I could sing war songs, comic songs (such as were then extant), negro songs (I imagined I could beat the negroes singing their own songs), and religious songs not a few. I can remember when soldiers and others would give me money to get me to sing for them, and I was specially fond of singing the old camp meeting songs, such as "Old Ship of Zion" and "Lord, I Want More Religion," and many other such songs. I would usually put my whole being into the song. Often when I was with a company of other children where any others could sing we would thus spend much of the time; and I would sometimes "make like" I was preaching to them. But while all this was true, I was by no means a good boy all the way, as has been seen in former chapters. I think, however, I might have been good if my associations had always been such as to have cultivated these earlier impressions; but the other side of life was developed the more.

When I was recovered from my backslidings, as related in another chapter, I then began to realize in earnest that I was indeed called to preach, and hence that larger preparation would be necessary if I followed up these convictions. Of course I wondered how this could ever be accomplished, as I had almost no education and there were no means in sight with which this could be secured. I had by this time, with the little snatches of schooling I had enjoyed, learned to read and write, but this was about the extent of my knowledge so far as books were concerned. I did not know the first principles of English grammar and could not have added two quarters of a dollar by figures and given the result. I was very "green," and, as may be seen in future chapters, I was really much greener than I yet imagined. I supposed I must have felt like the disappointed Irishman who was trying to reach home to spend Christmas. After he had walked full forty miles on Christmas Eve and stopped to spend the night, he told the family where he was stopping that he wished to go five miles farther for breakfast next morning in order that he might reach his journey's end the sooner, and, stating that he was very tired, asked that he might be permitted to retire. When his room was ready and he had gone to bed and was soon fast asleep, some mischievous boys, just to have some fun, took smut and grease and blacked his face. When he awoke next morning he bounded out of bed, dressed, and started on his journey without washing his face. Of course he knew nothing of the smut. When he reached the place where he would take breakfast and called at the gate, the lady readily informed him that they did not entertain negroes. He said he was not a negro; but

she insisted that he was and told him to go on off. To this he again replied that he was not a negro, but was Pat O'Galligher, at which the lady, seeing there was some joke in the matter, had him step in front of the mirror. With an air of disappointment he said: "Faith, and I will have to go all the way back; they have waked up the wrong man." And thus I must have felt when called to preach, seeing I was without preparation. But then we must remember that it is written in God's Word that he "hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and . . . the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

But as one of my older brothers had come home by this time to stay, it was thus made possible for me to go to school. Before starting to school, and having carried this burden of conviction for several months (although as yet I had not spoken of these impressions to any one, not even to my mother), I was out looking for some oxen one afternoon, preparing to do some hauling, when I met our presiding elder, a well-dressed, high-toned English gentleman and a great preacher—in fact, he was my ideal preacher. He was at the time I met him walking back and forth in a grove of great trees. I have imagined since that he was probably at the time preparing a sermon. When I approached him, I said: "Howdy, Mr. Kendall." It was Rev. Amos Kendall. I didn't address him as "brother." I had not learned to call the preachers "brother" yet; and I couldn't well afford to call him "brother" then anyway, as he was such a gentleman in my estimation, while I was only a poor orphan boy, and was at this time barefooted, with my pants rolled up, and in my shirt sleeves, and had on only one sus-

pender. I was really a regular "one-gallows" boy anyway. But when I had thus spoken to him he stepped toward me, reached out his hand, and shook hands with me cordially, as if he were glad to see me. I then told him who I was, and he assured me that he remembered me, and said he had met me at my mother's tent at the camp meeting. His kindness encouraged me, and I then called him "Brother Kendall." Kindness is really the cheapest thing we deal in, and yet a kind word or a warm handgrip has inspired many a young person to a life of usefulness. Dr. C. L. Smith, of St. Louis, told his people to go down among the shops and shake hands with the men at work there. He said they might get a little smut on their hands, but they could wash the smut off, while the men couldn't wash the handshake off. Thus encouraged, I told Brother Kendall I wanted license to exhort, to which he replied that he was very sorry he had not known this the evening before, that he would have gotten my recommendation from my Church. (He had preached at our church the preceding night.) Here I first learned that it was necessary for one to secure a recommendation from his Church in order to secure a license to preach. He told me I would have to wait till next quarterly meeting. I regretted this, as I was anxious to have the matter settled at once; but it seemed there was no remedy.

However, after I left him and had time to plan a little I decided to secure a recommendation that night and go to the quarterly meeting next day, and ask for the license; and so I did, making a round from one house to another securing names until I had a sufficient number to recommend me. I stole off from the home

folks, as I did not yet care for them to know of my plans. So I went to a neighbor and borrowed a blind mule and rode it to the quarterly meeting, a distance of twenty miles. But what did it matter whether the mule was blind or could see, if I reached the Quarterly Conference and secured my license? If one cannot do best, he ought to be willing to do next best. If he cannot fight in the armor of Saul, if it is all too large for him, he should take the sling and pebble and knock the old giant's brains out and cut his head off. If the mule *was* blind, I got my license; and besides this, I was given a good home while there, and the dear good people soon made me feel that I was one of them by their great kindness to me. Among other kindnesses shown me, the lady where I was stopping gave me a book entitled "Fred Brenings," which proved a great blessing to me, as it was the biography of a young preacher who had to start as I was then starting, with but little to encourage him, but who afterwards made a very useful minister of the gospel.

As a sort of excuse for going to this particular quarterly meeting (I mean excuse to the home folks) I had taken a log chain part of the way to exchange for one of ours a gentleman had taken off by mistake, leaving his, which was not so good, with us. So I thought this would be a sort of apology for going just at that particular time, as I had an idea that my brother in particular would discourage the trip. It was a very busy season, and he would make the plea that I was needed at home. They had learned of my movements, however, and the design of my trip before my return; and when I reached home on Sunday evening my brother asked mother where he could find the hammer

and a nail. She replied that she supposed they were about the house somewhere, and asked what he wanted with the hammer and a nail on Sunday, to which he replied: "I want to knock two of Bud's front teeth out, so he can strip the chicken bones." They called me "Bud," and I *was* then a preacher.

CHAPTER XX.

My First Sermon.

Just two weeks from the time I was licensed to exhort I went to our home church to hear Brother C. L. Bates preach. Brother Bates was one of our own boys, reared in our community; but he had been away for some time, and had developed into a fine preacher, and was at the time stationed in one of our leading young towns. Our people were proud of him, and of course would give him a good congregation, which they did on this occasion. But when the appointed hour came the preacher was not there. We waited quite a while, but still he did not come, and still we were waiting, when some one came in and reported that he would not be there, as he had been called away to his charge on important Church business. When this was told us, "Uncle Billy" Boland turned to me, saying, "Brother Elias, you'll have to preach for us;" to which I replied: "Uncle Billy, I can't preach." He said: "Well, you'll have to make us a talk; we don't license men to do nothing." I hadn't thought of this before, and so there seemed to be nothing left but for me to go ahead and do the best I could. I arose and approached the pulpit. I had never done this before in the capacity of a preacher. My flesh fairly tingled with fear; but I soon went through the preliminary services, and announced my text. It is not expected for an exhorter to talk from a text. This is going beyond his limits. But I took this authority, and

announced a text; and I have always felt glad that I chose as my first text "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." I always did think if a thing was worth doing at all it was worth doing well. So I moved out, and they said I talked fifteen minutes. I must have scattered about considerably to have occupied so much time. But it doesn't matter so much if one does scatter a little if he succeeds.

A father and son went out squirrel-hunting. They soon found a squirrel. The son, who had always boasted of his steady nerve and splendid marksmanship, raised his gun and fired, but the squirrel turned to the other side of the limb; he fired again, but the squirrel turned to the other side of the limb again. Then the father, who was quite palsied and couldn't hold a steady hand, took the gun, and said: "Let me show you how to kill squirrels." He raised the gun, and his hand wabbled all around; but when he fired, down came the squirrel. The boy said: "O yes, just shoot all over the tree; any one could kill a squirrel."

Well, what does it matter if one does scatter, if he gets the game? When I descended from the pulpit my friend, Captain Beadles, said: "Elias has one qualification: he has enough brass on his face to make a half dozen silver watches." I didn't know this. I was nearly frightened to death. As Gilderoy would say, I had been "swallowing great big chunks of nothing." But they did say one other thing that was somewhat complimentary. They said when I got through I quit.

It is important to know when to quit. Some people have never learned this lesson. Call on them for a short prayer, and they will pray all over the world and

pray for everything; and the same if they are called on to do any public service. A "white-cravated" professor came out from one of our cities to talk to a country Sunday school; and when he arose he said he had so much to say that he didn't know what to say first, and repeated this, "I have so much to say," when a little boy who could hardly talk plain said: "I'll tell you what to say; just say, 'Amen,' and sit down." We should learn to practice brevity in all our public utterances.

A number of other compliments were passed on this my first sermon. Some said: "I'll tell you, Elias will make a preacher after a while." You can imagine how this made me feel. It is best not to be elated over such things, though. But these earliest impressions, whether they were favorable or unfavorable, can never be erased from the mind; they are ever fresh and will linger with us to the end. Of course I had many things to learn yet, as will be clearly shown in the chapters immediately following. I thought a good deal about being a preacher one way and another, but it was some weeks before I was called on to exercise in public again.

Story.—Two boys grew up in the same community. They attended the same school, and were often together in the social circles. Finally they drifted apart, and one became a Methodist minister and the other a Hardshell Baptist. After long years of separation, the Hardshell was traveling through a community in a newly settled country one day, and, seeing a lot of horses tied about a schoolhouse, turned in to see what it meant, and on approaching the door recognized his friend of other days seated in a pulpit and a small con-

gregation of worshipers ready to begin services. When he walked in he was in turn recognized by the minister in the pulpit, who came down to him at once and invited him to preach. He at first declined; but his friend insisted that he should preach, and would take no excuse. So the Hardshell went into the pulpit and began the service. As soon as he commenced speaking an elderly lady began to weep, and the louder he would speak the more she would weep. At the conclusion of the service this same lady invited the ministers to dine with her, and her invitation was accepted. Before they had reached the home the minister who had preached asked his Methodist friend if this old lady always did this way during preaching, to which he replied that he had never known her to act thus before, and he was not able to understand her. This excited the curiosity of the visiting minister even more, and when seated at the dining table he asked her himself what it was in his sermon that day that excited so much emotion on her part. She replied: "When we came to this country there was no one except me and my dear old husband and our dear little old mule. After a while my dear old husband died, and there was no one left but me and my dear little old mule; and when you began speaking today you reminded me so much of my dear little old mule, and the louder you spoke the more I was reminded of my dear little old mule." And by the time she was through explaining she was weeping as much as she did during the sermon. I have related this story because a brother was unmerciful enough to tell me when I was starting out that my preaching reminded him of this story.

CHAPTER XXI.

Filling a Pastor's Appointment.

Passing through a community some ten or twelve miles from home, I found our pastor, Rev. Ben H. Bounds, engaged in a protracted meeting. He asked me to stay and assist him. This was quite complimentary, being invited to assist the pastor, and yet I shuddered at such responsibility; but the people insisted that I ought to remain, and so I did. Brother Bounds was very kind. He was a great preacher; but he had certainly not forgotten how to treat a boy. I can never forget his kindness to me, not only then but ever afterwards. We were together here for several days—rode together, slept together, and prayed together. He was a man of much prayer—a good model for a young preacher. Our meeting was quite successful.

At the close Brother Bounds stated that he was sorry he could not be at his next appointment at that church, as he had to be at the District Conference at Abbeville at that time. He said he didn't know whom he could get to fill his appointment. I thought he ought to know —I was sitting right there. He was finally reminded of my presence; and turning to me, he said: "Brother Kilgore, will you fill my appointment?" He called me "Brother Kilgore" now. I answered: "Yes, sir." Of course I did. Why shouldn't I? I was now a preacher. In fact, I would have felt somewhat disappointed if he had not asked me. So now I had nearly a month to go on. Certainly there need be no lack of prepara-

tion. I still thought a good deal about being a preacher and having an appointment, but didn't put so much stress on the matter of preparation. And so the weeks came and went, and I still had no sermon. I had heard somewhere in the brush that if a man would open his mouth God would fill it, and he will; but there is a way to open his mouth. We have God's written word containing his will to men, and we are commanded to read: "Search the Scriptures." Besides this, there is an abundance of religious literature in every form, thus presenting us with opportunity to store our minds with knowledge, that we may be "thoroughly furnished unto every good work." It is not supposed that one can teach philosophy who has never studied the science, nor can one impart knowledge in arithmetic who has never studied arithmetic; neither can one be expected to teach the gospel who has no knowledge of the gospel. But I had not learned these things, and so went on, thus approaching the time without preparation.

About the middle of the week preceding the appointment I took down my Bible and began to look for a text, and, as the colored brother would say, I "hunted all the way from generation to revolution," but could find no text I thought I could preach from. Saturday morning came, and I still had no text. By this time, however, I had thought of a text I imagined I could preach from; but I wasn't certain whether it was in the Bible or not, and I didn't know how to find a text. I knew nothing of the existence of such a thing as a concordance or reference Bible. It was some time after I was licensed to exhort when a brother told me I would have to get me a reference Bible. I didn't know any more what he was talking about than if he had

been speaking in Greek. On Saturday I went to Dr. Johnson, who was a Baptist preacher and a friend of mine, and told him I wanted him to give me a text for next day. He laughed at me, and said he could hardly find texts for himself. I didn't understand why he laughed; I couldn't see where the fun came in, though I think I do now. I had had a month to go on, and didn't have a text, and it was now only one day till the time was up for me to preach. But I told him I thought I knew a text I could preach from, but didn't know how to find it. He got his Bible and found it for me in a moment. I imagined he knew the Bible by heart; anyway he found my text. So I returned home, caught my horse, dressed for the occasion, borrowed my brother's saddlebags and put my hymn book and Bible in them and probably some other things, so they would look like a preacher's, and then borrowed my other brother's big shawl. The preachers wore shawls instead of overcoats then. I was soon off for the appointment. But I had no umbrella and didn't need one specially, but then I was a preacher; so I stopped at the first house and borrowed an umbrella. It was a regular borrowed outfit. I then continued the trip. I rode slow like a preacher, sang "How Firm a Foundation," and whistled religious tunes; and I never felt more like a preacher in my life.

It was Saturday evening. I went six miles on the way, and stopped to spend the night with "Billie" Cook, a cousin by marriage, who had just previously joined the Church and wanted to pray in public. He asked me to write him out a prayer. I did it; and I am sorry I didn't preserve a copy of that prayer. But he and his family did treat me like a preacher. We talked

a long time, and then had family prayers. This was right. People ought to hold prayers in their homes. Every Christian household ought to have a family altar, with prayer once or twice a day. There is very little danger of serious backsliding in a home where there is regular family devotion. After prayer he took me to my room. I had a room all to myself like a preacher, with a table and bowl and pitcher and else like a preacher. I went to bed like a preacher, turned over like a preacher, and slept like a preacher. Next morning I awoke, got up and dressed, and walked out and looked at the chickens and garden. I walked like a preacher—swung along. The reader will remember how preachers walk. I looked at my shadow to see how much like a preacher I looked. Did you ever look at your shadow?

Breakfast was soon over, and we were off again for the appointment. My cousin accompanied me. It was a beautiful, bright autumn day. We hadn't gone far before we fell in with others on their way to church. I heard them say: "Yonder is the preacher now." And I was. Some would say: "Good morning, parson." And I said: "Good morning, sir." We were soon approaching the church. I could hear the mules and horses, and I began to feel nervous some way. I felt like I might have some fever, and was sorry I felt that way, as I had wanted to be at my best. I rode up, hitched my horse, took my saddlebags and shawl and umbrella, and walked up through the crowd gathered in the shade of the trees in front of the church, and said: "Howdy." That was the way the older preachers did. I didn't wait to talk long to any one, but went in, placed my saddlebags in the pulpit, and began

the service at once. There was another brother present who had been licensed to exhort just two weeks before that, and I thought it would be but the part of ministerial courtesy for me to take him into the pulpit with me. I didn't let him preach, though; no, sir! It was my appointment.

So I soon announced my text: "Cease to do evil; learn to do well." Here I cleared my throat and spit, and cleared my throat and spit, but couldn't add a word. I said: "We'll have the text again, 'Cease to do evil,'" etc. And again I cleared my throat and spit, and gave them the text again. I couldn't preach from it or out of it nor around it. In fact, there was nothing in it for me. I guess I felt a little like the Irishman who was digging the well. His wife was drawing the dirt, and the walls began to cave, and a great portion rolled in on the Irishman. The wife bent over the well, saying: "Are ye kilt? Are ye dead?" And he replied: "No, I'm not dead; but I'm speechless." I turned to the brother in the pulpit with me, and said: "Brother Thomason, please conclude for me." He arose and announced "On Jordan's Stormy Banks" as the song. I had already been feeling that we were in some sort of stormy region. He announced it with the air of a bishop, and told them to sing without lining, and they did; but when they had finished the second verse and begun the third, he began to talk. They noticed that he was talking, and he saw that they were singing; and when they had reached the middle of the first line they stopped still on a high key. At this the speaker became greatly confused and paced back and forth in the stand, repeating: "I tell you to repent and turn to thee; I tell you to repent and turn to thee." This

he repeated several times, and then he sat down and did not call on any one to conclude. So there we sat, and there the people sat. It didn't look as though they knew what came next, and I am sure I didn't.

Finally, however, I recovered consciousness sufficiently to call on Brother Jones to pray. Brother Jones was new in the business; hence he prayed a little prayer about an inch long. I then arose and pronounced the benediction. I had learned the apostolic benediction, which was the best thing we had that day. After the sermon and all was over Brother Jones came around to me and said: "You didn't do as well to-day as you did before." I reckon I knew it. If a preacher makes a failure, he need not be told about it; he is already painfully conscious of the fact. Some of the people came forward and asked us home with them for dinner. I replied: "Thank you; but I'm not feeling very well to-day." I felt that I would have given the horse I was riding if those old saddlebags had been at home. I wasn't a preacher anyway. I learned two lessons, however, that day: One was never to try to do anything, even for God, without some sort of preparation, especially when there is opportunity for doing this; and the other lesson learned was to depend altogether on the Holy Spirit for help.

I rode home that afternoon, a distance of twelve miles, feeling very much inclined to quit; but other things came in my way of a more encouraging character, and thus I was stimulated to persevere in the good work. I will tell the reader of some of these helps and encouragements in my next chapter, and will only add now that the trials related here proved a very great blessing to me in disguise.

CHAPTER XXII.

Plagiarism and Imitation.

(*To Be Avoided.*)

Soon after the experience recorded in the preceding chapter, which came so near ditching me entirely, I heard Brother Blount, a Baptist minister, preach a sermon on "Repentance" from the text: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." It was a clear, plain presentation of the subject, given in such a way that a child could take it in; and I carried the entire sermon away with me. I remembered all the preacher's points perfectly; and when there was another opportunity offered for me to preach, I announced Brother Blount's text and preached his sermon. Of course I did not repeat his exact language, but I gave his leading divisions and points, and clothed these up in my own language. I continued to repeat this on the rounds when called on for a talk, probably a dozen times or more, until the people who had heard me more than once began to see that it was just the same old thing all the time; and worse still, some of them who had heard Brother Blount recognized this as his sermon, and began to make mention of this to me and to others. I found this almost, if not altogether, as trying as had been my failure on the former occasion. It is best not

to use other men's material too extravagantly. Some people are apt to detect it and make it the worse for us. A little original thought is better for the development and growth of a man than much taken from other people. Then I have found it unsafe to try to imitate or pattern after other men; it is better to be one's self.

A brother minister related to me a bit of his own experience on this line, which is quite suggestive. This brother was broad and brainy, quite scholarly, had a fine physique, and withal was an able minister; but he was not a revivalist. This didn't seem to be his gift. He had preached some five or six years, and yet he said if any one had ever been converted under his ministry he didn't know it. This seemed to trouble him very much, and more so when he was afterwards associated with another minister specially gifted in this line. He had invited this preacher to assist him in a meeting in his own charge, and as he sat and witnessed the wonderful results of the other preacher's efforts—saw the altar filled with penitents at each succeeding service, the bright, happy conversions, and the great revival influence among God's people—he said that if it took that to make success he himself was a failure, and said, furthermore, that he felt that he would like to witness similar results attending his own ministry. So he decided that if it ever came his turn to conduct another meeting he would adopt his assisting brother's methods as nearly as possible. Soon after reaching this conclusion the assisting minister was taken violently ill and had to leave the meeting. They had had a fine service at the eleven o'clock hour, and announcement had been made for the night service with a good deal of emphasis; but the brother was taken sick after-

wards and went home, leaving all the responsibility in the hands of the minister in charge. He said he knew if he returned to his own methods the work would be a failure from then on, if he must judge the future by the past, and decided that if he was ever going to use the other minister's methods it had as well be then as at any other time, and so that night he announced his text. His custom was to preach from notes, but this time he ran over his notes and finished up in about half his usual time. The people looked at him intensely. He thought he had their attention and imagined the altar would be full of penitents again; but when he concluded his discourse, called for a song, and came down to make the call for seekers, no one came. He remembered that the other brother had stamped his foot, and so he would stamp his, but said he didn't know how to do this and reminded himself of an old horse with the stringhalt. He was also reminded that the brother had slapped his hands, and he tried this; but he was very awkward at this, as he had never practiced it. Still the penitents did not come. At this point he also recalled the fact that the revivalist had stood on the front bench to exhort the people, and with this he ascended the front seat; but he had not measured himself by the other preacher, he being much the taller. When he stepped on the front bench his head struck the chandelier, which made a great noise, thus attracting the attention of the people to this and detracting from the interest of the service. His head struck the little knob under the chandelier, which came near knocking a hole in his head and hurt him badly. He had by this time gotten up a good perspiration, and thought it was blood running down on his face; he

put his hand to his face to see, then sat down in disgust at his own folly, and decided he wouldn't make a good evangelist. Better use the talent God has given us. If we cannot fight in the armor of Saul, if it is too large for us, we may take the sling and pebble and knock the giant's brains out and cut his head off. Better use the gifts God has bestowed. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Schooldays.

It has already been stated in this little volume that one of my older brothers had come home to stay when I was licensed to exhort; hence it was thus made possible for me to go to school, and I began at once to work to this end. Some one of my friends had told me it would be necessary for me first of all, if I intended to be a public speaker, to study English grammar; said I might get some one else to write my letters or make my calculations, but I could never get any one to do my speaking for me, if I expected to preach. This looked like pretty good logic, and so when I entered school (it was our home school) I asked my teacher to allow me to spend most of my time on this one study, which he did. I would read one lesson each day and write some, and the remainder of the time was spent on my grammar lessons. I found it very hard to understand at first, but as time passed I began to get an insight into its meaning and merits, and made such headway that at the end of three months my teacher asked me to take charge of a large grammar class, as he needed some help, and stated for my encouragement that some members of the class had been studying two years, but of course they were carrying several other studies. I took the class and made good progress, continuing my own studies at the same time; and feeling that I had

learned a lesson in this—that of being definite in my work—I chose ever after to try to single out some particular study and master it before I turned loose, rather than scatter too much. I never had any trouble with my teachers; loved them all, and they seemed pleased with my work. I think, however, I would have made much better headway with my studies if there had not been one difficulty in my way. I was exceedingly fond of the girls—always had a sweetheart—and it seems to me I could come nearer losing my head on this line than on any other. I have often wondered if boys are as crazy about the girls now as we were then. I cannot say I can attach any special blame to them, if such is the case, as I suppose human nature is about the same in all ages. I cannot speak for others, but I have always thought I would probably have learned much more rapidly in a school for boys only than I did in a coeducational school. Of course others may differ from this. However, notwithstanding this difficulty, I went on and made fairly good progress going to school and teaching at intervals until a sweet, pretty girl got me so bewildered that I turned my whole attention to an effort to secure her companionship for the journey of life; and after some months Miss Paris Davis, daughter of the late Dr. R. H. Davis, of Atlanta, Miss., and I were made one, Rev. J. M. Hampton officiating. Of course I was never happier than when I realized to a certainty that I was the winner of this sweet prize. She remained with me and shared my joys and sorrows for nearly twenty years, and then, dying in the full triumphs of a living faith, went home to heaven, leaving behind with me five children, two others having preceded her to the better land.

Among her last words to me were: "Bring the children to heaven with you." This I hope to be able to do, even though the way seems dark and difficult at times. After our marriage I taught school one year, boarding in my own sweet mother's home, and then knocked at the door of the North Mississippi Conference for admission as a traveling preacher, and was accepted or admitted on trial; but about this I will write more later.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Young Teacher.

Having spent several months in school, mostly in the home schools, incurring considerable expense (and that, too, while I was without means or any one to aid me in a financial way), there was an opening for me to teach a few weeks of an unexpired term of school. The teacher elect had been compelled to give up the school on account of failing health, and the remainder of the session was tendered me; and although I felt my incompetency as yet to undertake such a work, still, as it was an opportunity for me to possibly secure some much-needed help, should I find myself able to fill the place at all, I felt it my duty to make the effort anyway, even at the risk of failing. So I went to the county superintendent and stood the examination—or at least he passed me. It was Judge Lyon, now of Okolona, Miss., and I have always felt grateful to him for giving me a certificate, although he may have had to bend his conscience a little to do this; for while I was by this time very well up on some things necessary, still I had made but little proficiency in the study of mathematics, even in arithmetic, and hence I could see how he must have made it as easy as possible for me. Through his clemency I had thus secured a license to teach in the public schools of the county in which I had been reared. I went at once to take charge of the school offered; and although I had a

number of pupils studying arithmetic, still I was able to keep ahead of them, and had but little trouble until one afternoon a young man brought me an example that I had not yet noticed. As soon as my eye fell on the page I saw that I would be stalled if I made the attempt to work it for him; and so, to waive the matter without letting him know I saw any special difficulty in the example, I told him that I was very busy just then having recitations (which was true), and to work the others on that page, and when I had more leisure I would explain the one he had brought. But I managed to keep excessively busy the remainder of that afternoon, and did not reach him any more, but told him we would do the sum the first thing next morning. I went to my boarding place (I was boarding with an old teacher, and hence felt pretty comfortable, knowing I could get help if I should fail at any time on anything myself). That evening when I reached my room I went to work, and spent till supper time trying to do the sum, but failed. When the old teacher came in (it was Uncle Garlton Howard, as we all called him), I told him of my trouble and asked his help. He readily consented, as I knew he would do. But after working at it himself several hours he gave up in despair and seemed greatly worried over the matter. So there I was. What would I do? To go back next morning and inform my pupil that I could not work the example would be ruin to me there, or at least I thought so, and I still believe it would. I slept but little that night, and just an hour before day I borrowed the old teacher's horse and rode to the home of my old preceptor, Prof. J. A. McArthur, and just at daybreak I called at his gate and informed

him of my embarrassment and asked his assistance. He invited me in, and when we were seated together he had not made a dozen figures on the slate when the whole thing opened up to me and appeared as easy as could be, and I wondered why I had not seen it before. The Professor then informed me that I could work almost any example ahead of me by the same rule. I returned to the school that morning and called the young man to me and worked and explained the example to him as though I had been master of the situation, and neither he nor any other pupil there ever knew that I had found the least trouble. "Where there is a will there is a way." This also proved a blessing to me farther on, for when I returned to school myself I made a specialty of this study, and in the next school I taught I was thoroughly prepared in this particular line. So this was another blessing in disguise.

CHAPTER XXV.

My First Meeting.

During the year spent at the old home teaching school, after my marriage, I was solicited by some of my patrons and the people to hold a protracted meeting in the schoolhouse where I was teaching. It was some distance from the regular church, and there were a number of good citizens who had never been converted or connected themselves with any Church; and so there seemed to be an opening for a good work there if a proper effort were made and the right things could be done. So, after some consideration, although this seemed quite an undertaking for one with so little experience in this line of work, I decided to make the effort, and began at once to plan for the meeting.

Some preparation was necessary in fitting the house for this new use, and other arrangements would have to be made also. I succeeded in securing some local preacher help, and in due time we began the meeting. There was a deal of sickness in the community, and it looked as though everything had conspired to militate against us. The meeting was to begin on Friday night, and there were only five persons present—one woman, four men, and possibly one or two children. The outlook did seem a little gloomy, to say the least of it; but the time had been announced and preparations all made. So we continued, even against the odds, trusting God for the results. Somehow I felt

that the sickness in the neighborhood would subside and the other difficulties be removed, so that we could and would have success, and my faith was not disappointed. We hadn't gone far in the work before the congregations began to grow and interest to increase, and before the fourth day had closed several conversions had been reported, among the number one of my own brothers and one or two of my older pupils. Of course I felt abundantly rewarded for what I had done in the work; but the interest still increased, and on the morning of the fifth day Mrs. Abney came to me and said she would be glad for me to talk to the Judge, referring to her husband. Judge Abney was sixty-eight years old, a man of large experience and extensive reading, and withal a great politician; indeed, he was a man of strong intellectuality, but he was a great old sinner. He seemed to have no love for the Church and but little respect for the ministry. If he ever attended church, it was only that he might collect a crowd about him in the shades of the trees and discuss the political issues of the day; and if the minister in charge or the Church people didn't do to suit him, he would go away in a rage, and pour forth a volley of vituperation and abuse that would make one's flesh tingle if he had any sympathy for the Church. This was the character of the man I had been asked to approach on the subject of religion; and I but little more than a beardless boy!

The reader can easily imagine how I would shudder at the thought of such thing. But the responsibility had been laid at my feet, the burden was upon me, and I could not shake it off; and while I dreaded it, still I seemed to see this as the only decided opportunity

the old man would ever have to return to God. I felt that God had chosen me as the instrument by which this was to be accomplished; and so, feeling weighed down with the worth of the man's soul, I asked him to take a walk with me, which he very readily consented to do. We walked some distance to a big spring. (The schoolhouse was on his land.) When we were seated together at the spring, we were soon engaged in conversation about the spring, the weather, the crops, about stock, and, indeed, about almost everything but the thing I went there to talk with him about—the interest of his soul. If the reader ever wanted to ask an old man a question and didn't know how to get at it, he can have some idea of my feelings that day. Finally, however, I mustered up all the moral courage within me, and asked him pointedly if he did not feel that he ought to be a Christian. To my great surprise and still greater relief, he assured me that this was the question that was then concerning him most. He said he knew he couldn't have very much longer to live; and while he regretted to have to offer the Lord such a little fragment of his time, still he didn't want to be lost. He said, however, that we had more or less excitement in our meeting, and that he couldn't stand excitement of any kind; said he could pray better down there in the leaves than he could elsewhere. Seizing the opportunity, I replied: "All right, Judge; let us engage in prayer together." And so we did. I led the prayer, of course; and when it was ended, I saw the Judge brush the tears away and felt encouraged. We walked back to the place of worship together, and at the close of the sermon I went to him in the audience and asked him if he wouldn't go to

the altar with me, at which he shook his head. I returned to my place; but when I saw him at the next service in his accustomed seat, I felt certain that it would be safe to approach him again, and so I did; but he again shook his head. I said: "Judge, I'm mightily interested in you; won't you kneel here and let me pray for you?" His reply was: "When you call to prayer, I will." I stepped back into the altar and stated that we were going to prayer and if any persons would like to be remembered we would be glad to make special prayer for them if they would kneel, to which Judge Abney responded favorably, as he had said he would do. It was probably the first time he had knelt in church in fifteen or twenty years; but he kept yielding more and more until two days later. My mother had asked me to preach from a certain text; and while I was not much accustomed to making sermons on short notice, this was mother's request, and then the text presented itself to me as an easy one, and I therefore made sufficient preparation with it to take the risk and announce it for the hour. When I had gone through the first, second, and third divisions, and was dwelling on the fourth, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life," etc., the Judge arose and asked permission to talk, which, of course, was granted; and in a few words he made full confession and declared himself on the Lord's side for the rest of his days. He was powerfully converted, and prayed in public before that service was closed, praying an able prayer. As a matter of course, there was much rejoicing on the part of the Church, and the work swept on to greater victory.

I have related all this in detail to show the reader

how the Lord can and will use us if we will put ourselves in his hands and follow where he leads, although the way may seem quite uninviting.

The above meeting resulted in the conversion of a great many souls, my two brothers being among the number. Judge Abney became a very efficient worker in the Church during the remainder of his days on earth, and three years later closed his life work and went to his reward. But others lived to work much longer, and some are still living, after twenty-five years have come and gone, and are still faithful to their vows, filling good places in the Church and directing their homes for God.

ILLUSTRATION.—We have this story of a gentleman who was making a visit to an asylum. When he had been shown around on the inside and was in the act of leaving, having passed out at the gate, he saw a large man standing near by with his eyes set on him, and as he looked more carefully he was convinced that the man belonged on the inside. He began to walk away, and this dreaded individual started toward him. He quickened his steps, and when he turned to look again the man almost had hold of him. This frightened him so that he ran with all his might; and when he looked again and saw that the wild man was nearly on him, he stumbled and fell, and the man stooped down over him as he passed and touched him, saying: "O yes, I got your tag." Thus we have found that when we have been afraid of men—afraid to approach them on religious subjects, and sometimes afraid to come nigh them, as recorded in our preceding chap-

ter—they are, in fact, easily approached, and are often very glad to converse on these lines and are themselves believers. So all the scare is only evidence of moral cowardice on our part. The Lord will never impress us to do a thing without preparing the way for us to do the work.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Conference.

As my application to the Conference for admission on trial into the traveling connection has been referred to, it might be interesting to the reader for me to tell him more about this. It was during this same year that I had, in company with my young wife, attended my first District Conference, and this to me was a great occasion. I had never seen one of our bishops before, and here I enjoyed this privilege. Bishop Keener presided, and there was so much dignity in his bearing and there seemed to be so much wisdom in all his words that I went away wonderfully impressed with his greatness as a man, and in this I was not mistaken. Then the social fellowship of the brethren, the sermons they preached, and the deliberations of the body in a general way all left a lasting impression on my young, untrained mind and heart. But it still remained for me to meet the larger body and be more profoundly impressed with the greatness of our Church. I left home on Saturday evening, so that the whole trip to the railroad, a distance of twenty-two miles, would not have to be made on Sunday, as it was necessary for me to be at the seat of the Conference on Monday for the examination. The Conference was held that year in Holly Springs, a distance of sixty miles by rail, and I suppose the reader will not be greatly surprised when I tell him that

I had as yet never been on a railroad train. This, among other things, was to be a new experience to me, although I was then a married man with a wife and one child, our firstborn being just two weeks old when I left home for Conference. Thus new experiences were coming to me in quick succession. I reached the station on Sunday evening, as planned, and spent the night in the home of our old friend, H. L. Fly, whose home has always been headquarters for the preachers at Coffeeville, Miss. There was much talk that night of the Conference and the preachers and their charges, etc. The next morning, after a good night's rest, a delightful breakfast, and good cheer on the part of Brother Fly and family, we boarded the train for Conference and sped along at a rapid rate. I can never forget the sensation created in my own mind by this new experience. It appeared to me that it would take all the thoughtfulness and all the care of all on board to hold the train in its place, and it seemed very strange to see some people engaged in reading and others in careless conversation, when I was almost holding my breath to be sure nothing serious would happen. On we went, passing different stations until our conductor called out "Holly Springs," and our company began to gather up their valises and other belongings to leave the train. We were soon off and assigned to our homes. My home was at Major Hooper's, a mile and a half from the church, in the northwest part of the city—in fact, out of the city—and it was very cold weather through the entire session; but I don't think I missed a service or anything of the kind during the entire time. While the distance to my boarding place was some consideration

during such weather, yet the largeness of the hospitality of the home after we would reach it, and the very kind way in which we were treated, served as an indemnity for the long walk through the cold. Brother Waters, who has long since gone to his reward, was my roommate, and we felt that we had the best place to stay anywhere about Holly Springs, and so we have always found it. There is some good along the way as well as evil. Most of Monday was spent in the examination room, and everything moved along very pleasantly indeed. In fact, we found even the members of our examining committee to be good, whole-souled, jolly fellows, and were having some real lively times with them, and there seemed nothing but sunshine ahead, when suddenly we were greatly shocked and grieved by a telegram that was handed to the chairman of our committee announcing the death of our dearly beloved Bishop Marvin. He was expected to be present at this session of the Conference, and had been announced to preach the Thanksgiving sermon. Those of us who had read in the *Christian Advocate* his letters, which were afterwards put into book form, entitled "To the East by Way of the West," had looked forward with great pleasure to this time when we hoped to see him; but now that this message of his untimely death had come, it was not surprising that Conference business was all suspended for a time and the whole Conference was in mourning. When the shock was somewhat over, business was resumed and the sessions went on from day to day until all was completed, and we were ready to return to our homes with our appointments for the year. It was truly a great occasion to me. I had

never heard two hundred preachers and laymen and women and a host of others all join in singing God's praises before, and it was simply glorious. The impression made could be nothing less than great. I was assigned to the Saltillo Circuit. I had never heard of Saltillo before; didn't know there was such a place in the world; but soon learned by inquiry where it was and what it was to some extent. But of this I will write more in a future chapter. I was soon at home again to report what had happened. It seemed almost an age since I had seen my wife and little babe, and I was very glad to be back with them. In fact, that was the greatest baby in the country then. We thought we had already named her; but when I returned and reported the death of Bishop Marvin, her grandmother would have us add Marvin to her name, which we did, and she now bears that noble name.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The Circuit Rider.

After my return from the Conference and a few days spent at home, and when our baby was just four weeks old, I took my wife to her father's, a distance of twenty miles, to spend a couple of weeks while I could go and arrange for them on the new work. The distance from there to my work was about sixty miles. Dr. Davis, my wife's father, accompanied me twelve miles of the way, as he had business in that direction, and he seemed to feel great sympathy for me, as I was going out a stranger among strangers. The work of a Methodist preacher was, he said, one of perpetual sacrifice and privation, and so I have found it to a very great extent. I dined at Houston with Rev. H. E. Smith, who had served as our pastor the past year, and who with his Christian wife spoke words of encouragement to me. I then proceeded on my journey alone to Okolona, where I was entertained for the night in the home of my presiding elder, Rev. T. Y. Ramsey, who has long since gone to his new home in heaven. Brother Ramsey was truly a cultured Christian gentleman, and his wife was a very amiable woman. Theirs was a lovely home. His eldest son is now an able minister of the gospel and a member of the Little Rock Conference. Brother Ramsey directed me to Brother Dave Mourman's (one of my stewards) for the next night. This would bring

me into the bounds of my own charge and within two miles of my appointment for the following Sabbath. When I reached Brother Mourman's I found his residence to be one of the best-built country homes I had seen anywhere. It was elegantly furnished. I suppose I might have felt a little vain over this for a beginning, as I found Mrs. Mourman to be quite an accomplished lady, with servants for everything, and the other members of the home up-to-date in every particular. But my vanity was somewhat disturbed before I had time to enjoy it at all. When I rang the door bell an elderly gentleman, well-dressed, cleanly shaven, with his silvery locks smoothly brushed, answered to my call. When I introduced myself he said, "Yes, our new preacher, I suppose," and seemed quite glad to see me. He invited me in, and told me to set my saddlebags aside and be seated on the sofa. He said he knew that I must be tired. In this he had made no mistake, as I had ridden thirty miles on horseback through the prairie mud, and that too without dinner, and hence was quite glad to reach this elegant place to rest; and was feeling good over it when, about the third question, Brother Jones (for this was his name) asked me where I was from. I told him I was from Calhoun County, to which he replied with apparent surprise: "From Calhoun County?" Lord, have mercy! He would rather have been from anywhere else in the world than Calhoun County! He had always imagined Calhoun County as being a little corner of the world cut off to itself, and he kept poking this at me and guying me about it during that night and next morning. I remained until after dinner, but I met it as best I could. I soon discovered that he

was simply after a little fun, though I must confess it was a little trying as an introductory to my new work. I found great relief, however, when at the dinner table his daughter, Mrs. Mourman, said: "Brother Kilgore, did father tell you he was from Walker County, Ala?" Brother Jones tried to laugh with us at this, but his laughing apparatus would not work, and he had but little more to say of Calhoun County. Walker County, Ala., was at that time a sort of by-word, even if it has since become the "chief stone of the corner." I will say here, furthermore, that Brother Jones became one of my most ardent friends, and I spent many a pleasant hour in his hospitable home. On the following Sunday I was greeted by a very large congregation at Mooresville and another at Shiloh, and held what seemed to be very profitable services at both places. I spent the following week on the work, made the acquaintance of a goodly number of people, and filled another Sabbath before my return home to spend Christmas with our people and then move to our work. A few days at home, and we were on the way again—this time with as much baggage as we could pack in our buggy. I was accompanied by my wife and baby. The first night was spent at Houston, in the home of the now sainted Morgan Shell, and to say that we were kindly entertained by him and his good wife is to put it lightly. We must be off early the next morning in order to reach the work again by Sunday. I was intent on not missing a single appointment, if it could be avoided. The weather seemed fine when we started, except a little cold at night. But imagine our disappointment the next morning when we found it cloudy and quite

threatening. Soon after we left Brother Shell's snow began to fall, and increased at such a rate that we had gone only six miles when we had to seek a place for another night, stopping before noon at Warren Ried's, a Presbyterian home, where we were kindly entertained. Next day we would have gone farther, but after starting we found it so bitterly cold that we traveled only four miles and stopped again, and felt very glad there was a place where we could stop. I was acquainted with no one on this route, but it seemed our good fortune to find pleasant places to stay. This third night was spent at Houlka at Mrs. Harrell's, whose home afterwards became one of my regular stopping places. Sister Harrell was a devoted Methodist and one of the chief supporters of our Church in this community. The following day was Saturday, and we had hardly gotten started. We continued our journey and reached old Brother Daggett's, seven miles south of Pontotoc, where we would leave the regular Pontotoc road and take a cross country route for Tupelo, and thence to Saltillo, our charge. Here we spent another night, and Brother Daggett and family soon made us feel quite at home. The next day being the Sabbath, we would gladly have spent the night, and had planned to do so, but the weather began to look so threatening that we thought best to try to go farther. I have felt sure since that we were wrong in this. I don't think one saves any time by breaking the Sabbath. I confess that I have tried it in one way or other a number of times, and my candid belief is that I have sustained great loss in many ways by so doing. From Brother Daggett's we traveled ten miles without dinner, for ourselves or

the faithful horse, and found great difficulty in getting a place to spend the night—made several fruitless efforts to secure a place, and were compelled to cross a very bad swamp after dark. The roads were terrible, but we finally made it through without accident and began to renew our efforts to find lodging. We drove up in front of a nice-looking home and called. The lady came to the door. I told her we would like very much to spend the night with them, to which she replied that they could not accommodate us. I inquired as to how far it was to a place where we could probably stay. She supposed it was not more than a mile or two. I then insisted that if it were possible for them to take us in we would certainly appreciate the favor very much, that we were very cold and I had my wife and a little babe with me, and for their sake would be glad to stay. The lady then said she would see her husband, and it seemed that she was gone an age. I was never nearer frozen in my life; and as for Mrs. Kilgore and the baby, I suppose it was but little better, though they were probably better wrapped than I was, and had not been compelled to get in and out of the buggy in the mud so much as I. Still it was very bad on them too. Finally the lady returned, and said she supposed that they would have to take us in; and it may be known that I was not long getting the loved ones out of the buggy. We were soon at a warm fire; and as we had so far missed dinner and supper, I began to feel that the next best thing would be a good warm supper (but anything would have been acceptable), and as I kept hearing the dishes rattling my desire on this line was greatly increased; but when I thought they had had quite suffi-

cient time to make such preparation as they might think necessary, to my great disappointment they suggested that it was about time to retire, and invited us to our room. Our bishop had said just before reading out the appointments, after having made some other remarks, that he had always noticed that Methodist preachers got along about as well as anybody else. I had related this at home on my return from Conference. When we had reached our room that night, without supper and not having had any dinner either, my wife in a regular frolic of fun laughed at me and said: "Methodist preachers get along about as well as anybody else." I confess I could not see where the fun came in, but was glad nevertheless that she seemed to take such hardships so easily. We had an old lunch with us, prepared by her mother, and now five days old and frozen, but we thawed up some of it and ate enough to meet the necessities till morning, when we were given a nice warm breakfast. We were invited to call again in passing, and so went on our way. That night, after another hard day's drive, the weather still being quite cold, we found ourselves among our own members, but still not quite to the end of our journey. A short drive next morning brought us to our home. I had only secured a boarding place, as I had failed to find a suitable house for rent, and the charge had no parsonage. There were few parsonages in those days. So we boarded some and visited a good deal. In fact, soon after reaching the home where we were to board I found that the head of the household, although a local preacher in our Church, was given to very obscene language, indulging in vulgar jokes and anecdotes, and I very soon

decided that we would seek other quarters, which we did, and it was but a little while until this same man was in trouble and was compelled to leave the country between two suns. Such is usually the career of such characters. I never could endure vulgarity. As already stated, we spent much time visiting among our members, and my wife spent part of the year at her father's and my mother's, and so the year passed. I had eleven preaching places; held meetings at all of them. We witnessed a large number of conversions and a good work in every way, although we had to undergo many hardships. At the end of the year the people asked for my return to the work for another year. I don't know just why they did this, but they really had treated us as kindly, I suppose, as they felt able, and we learned to love many of them very much. This was especially true of dear Brother Bolding and family, of Saltillo. Better people never breathed the breath of life. Here was where Rev. G. W. Gordon found his noble little wife. Then I might mention in this connection the names of the Wests, the Burgeses, the Pearces, the Whitesides, the Griders, the Mayfields, and many others whose deeds are remembered and whose names will ever be cherished as among those who have helped us on our way.

Now I have recorded these things in this chapter that the reader may have some slight insight into the mixed experiences of a preacher's life. It is not all sunshine, nor is it all shadow. The victories won and the hope of a reward on the other side inspire him to greater efforts and help him to bear these burdens. St. Paul, speaking of the ministers, himself with the rest, says, "What is our joy or crown of rejoicing?" and

then answers this question in the form of another question: "Are not even ye in the presence of Christ at his coming?" So it is: we expect to meet again with those with whom we have labored here.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

My Second Year in Conference.

Our North Mississippi Conference held its annual session this year at Macon. I made the trip from Atlanta, Miss., to Macon and return on horseback. I had worked a hired horse the year before on the Saltillo Circuit, and paid twenty dollars for the use of it; and my work of eleven preaching places (nine regular Churches) had paid me only one hundred and eighty-five dollars, including a small missionary appropriation. Out of this, after meeting my other expenses, I was able to pay this rent for the horse, and had enough left to pay forty-five dollars in cash for a small horse, bought at a public sale, and money enough to fit me up for Conference; and so I rode my new horse to Conference on his trial trip. It was rather a long, wearisome trip; but the preachers did most of their circuit travel in this way in those days, and it was not considered a hardship for it to be so. I was late, however, reaching the seat of the Conference, and hence did not go before the examining committee, and was therefore continued in the class of the first year; but the following year I brought up both years, and hence lost no time.

The Conference at Macon left its usual impression. Our connectional officers were well represented here, and my conclusion was that "there were giants in the land in those days." I was entertained here in the

palatial home of Sister Ballard, near the church where the Conference was being held, and had a royal good time. At this session I was assigned to the Fulton Circuit, adjoining the one I had served the preceding year. I was soon back at home; and after a few days spent again with the loved ones there, we were again on our way to our new field of labor, although it was almost like going back home, as we were traveling in the same direction and I would preach at one church only three miles from one point on my old charge; besides this, I had already assisted the former pastor in a meeting at Fulton a few days, and hence was partially acquainted with those who were to be my parishioners for the incoming season.

This time we took part of our household goods, as I had secured rooms where we could use our own furniture, and thus reckon ourselves at home, although we took our meals with another family and paid board. My brother took us the greater part of the way. He intended to make the full trip; but we had such tough luck *en route* that he was compelled to leave us at the first station on the M. & O. Railroad (Verona) and return to his family, as he had left some of them so very unwell. On the way we had spent the first night at Sister Harrell's, at Houlka, where we had found good lodging, and were well on the way in the second day's journey, when, after already having a great deal of trouble, miring down a time or two and having to prize out, losing a good part of the day, late in the afternoon we stalled in the middle of a great pond of water. After working and prizing some time as best we could, there seemed nothing left to be done but get my wife out of the wagon and find a place for her and

the little one until something further could be done. The weather was again quite cold and threatening snow; but my brother had to strip off his shoes and roll up his pants above his knees and wade in the water until he could take our team loose from the wagon and hitch another fresh team to the load, this new team having been secured by riding at least two miles in search of some help. Having now gotten out of this trouble, we had four or five miles yet over muddy roads before we could reach a place to stay. I had ridden into the water when we were stalled and had taken my wife behind me on my horse and carried her to the nearest house until we could do all that had to be done; then we had to go for her and readjust things before we could go farther. But for all this, we drove into Verona a little after dark; and although we were muddy and by no means presentable, yet we found a warm welcome in the home of that broad-minded, big-souled Methodist preacher, Rev. J. B. Stone, who, with his good wife, seemed to do all he could to make us forget the trials of the way.

Here my brother left us next morning for his return trip, we took the train for Tupelo, were carried out from there on another wagon to our boarding place, and thus had another taste of the variety of a preacher's life.

But, as has already been noted with reference to our reception in Brother Stone's home, there are many good things as well as evil along the way. Now we were on our new circuit, with eleven preaching places again, including schoolhouse appointments, and had gotten the work very well in hand when at the first Quarterly Conference this (Fulton) work was consol-

idated with the Saltillo Circuit, where I had served before, and I was placed in charge of the whole work thus united. This gave me twenty-one preaching places a month, one appointment having been dropped from the Saltillo charge. In the circuit as then arranged there were nearly nine hundred members, and among them nine local preachers; hence it was not very astonishing that "Gilderoy" dubbed me "presiding elder."

On the Fulton side of the consolidated work, as on the other side, we had some noble men and women. The Bettses, the Gaithers, the Stones, the Spencers, and many others are yet remembered as among the very best people, and "Uncle Mack," as we called him, referring to Brother Cummings, was a regular team himself; and if I would write as touching the local preachers, I could have nothing but words of praise for them all. Uncle Ren Turner, Uncle Steve Gilmore, and Brothers Martin and Lloyd, though on the old list, were nevertheless helpful in the work; but more particularly Brother McDougle, Mark Pearce, and Dr. Mayfield, who always rendered very valuable help to the young pastors sent to that work. We loved them all. While the year's work was very heavy and laborious, our labors were crowned with rich results. Rev. Amos Kendall was our presiding elder that year, and gave us as much of his valuable time as possible, spending ten days at one time with us; and one could hardly fail of success with such backing as this. Take it all in all, we gather up many of the things of the year 1879, spent on this circuit, as among the most pleasant reminiscences of life, and expect to meet many of those good people in the sweet by and by.

We had some trials while here as well as all the good mentioned. First, the memorable storm which struck Brother Gillespie's home, where we were staying, and in my absence so frightened my wife that she was left almost a nervous wreck, and I think she hardly recovered from the shock the remainder of her life. Then our little daughter came very near leaving us here, lingering days and days on the very brink of the last river; but by the faithful care of good Dr. Phipps she recovered, and still lives to bless and comfort my life. Dr. Phipps was not a Methodist, but I learned this year more than ever by my associations with the Ellisons, the Claytons, and others of other denominations that a preacher can have friends among other people, if he will show himself friendly, and still be true to his own Church. I have always had good friends from other Churches and have never at any time been any the less a Methodist.

I don't think I would do myself justice to close this record of my work in the above-named charge without making mention of my very pleasant associations during this pastorate with Dr. Tom Bogan and his estimable family. My loved ones and I spent many happy hours in their home. When I first went to the Saltillo Circuit, among the first men with whom I became acquainted was Dr. Bogan, and I think at our first meeting he asked me for his Church letter. I had not become acquainted with him sufficiently to know why he wanted to sever his connection with us, and therefore waived the matter for the time, telling him I would attend to it at a convenient time at some later date if he still desired it. I soon learned that he was permanently located where he was, and, with his

consent, deferred his case from time to time until I had gotten the work well in hand and had had time to cultivate his acquaintance further; and so things continued until our summer meetings were over and Mooresville Church had been visited with a great revival of religion. A large number had been added to the roll of membership. He expressed his thanks to me more than once for having withheld his certificate. Some of his friends told me he had intended to unite with another denomination, but of this he had not informed me. At any rate, by this postponement we saved a very valuable member to our Church. It is not well to grant letters too hastily.

I wish time and the patience of the reader would justify me in making personal mention of other friends and recording many interesting incidents of these two years spent in this charge; but as it is not expected that all the history and events of two such years would be put in one or two short chapters of a work like this, I must pass over many of these things and only write of one particular meeting, which was rather remarkable in several respects, which I will do in my next chapter, and then pass on to other fields of labor through which the Lord has led us.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A Remarkable Meeting.

When I took charge of the Saltillo Circuit I found one Church called "Center Star," with one of the best houses of worship on the work and in a good community; but it was awfully run down. They had paid my predecessor only one dollar—just one dollar, I was told—and he was a good preacher and a good man. This church was our property and out of debt. About four miles north of this there was a union house of worship, built for everybody, but deeded to nobody. One after another as many as four different denominations had organized there, all weak, and a fifth denomination came in for the fifth Sundays. So every Sabbath was occupied at some hour; and instead of union, as the name indicated, there was nothing but division and strife, as is nearly always the case with these so-called "union" churches. There is generally more criticism of each other's methods and assailing of each other's doctrine at these places than elsewhere.

We found it so at this place to an unusual extent. The Hardshell Baptists would ridicule John Wesley and his followers, the Missionary Baptists would pay their respects to the Hardshells, the Campbellites would give us all a round, and when our turn would come we would always be asked to defend the Methodists. Thus things went on, and there wasn't a teaspoonful of religion in the whole thing. So when

I made my third round to that place and found the community in a regular turmoil of bitterness and strife over some recent utterances, I announced to them at the close of our service that I would not be there any more; that if the other denominations could do any good there with such a state of affairs they were perfectly welcome to do so; that, in the language of our sainted Marvin, "I would never return to that place unless the final judgment was held there," unless there was a great change in things as they then existed. I then turned my entire attention on the regular Sunday allotted to that part of the circuit to the Church alluded to in the beginning of this chapter, Center Star, giving them the full Sunday, and it was only a short time until the season for protracted meetings.

My action with reference to dropping the above appointment had not been approved by all the members of the Church thus abandoned; but the best element of them felt that I had done the right thing, and had transferred their membership to other places. When the appointed time came for the Center Star meeting, I drove into the neighborhood on Friday evening, accompanied by my wife, and stopped to spend the night at the home of Brother Wood Pearce, a member of my Church, and a man very well known in all that section of country—a man whom I afterwards learned to love very much. We were given a hearty welcome when we reached his house, and soon made to feel quite at home; but when reference was made to the approaching meeting, Brother Pearce told me that if I wanted to do any good I had as well and better go somewhere else, that it would be simply a waste of time to make an effort there, and assured me that the

people there did not want a meeting—to which I replied that, if they did not want one, they certainly needed one very badly.

On the following morning (Saturday) we went to the church, wife and I, accompanied by Brother Pearce and his daughter. Including our company there were seven persons present, and it did look a little unpromising, to say the least of it; but announcements were made for that night and the following day. The night attendance was somewhat larger, and we had a very good service with those who were present. The Sabbath dawned beautiful and bright, and it seemed that the Lord was on our side. The congregation was fairly good and the interest quite encouraging for that early stage of the meeting. That afternoon Brother Mark Pearce, my local preacher, and one of the very best of men every way, came into the meeting. He was a brother to the Pearce already mentioned. He preached that night; and while he preached I hid myself in the pulpit (it was an old-fashioned box pulpit) and prayed for the preacher as I scarcely ever did pray during a service. I heard but little of the sermon, but gave myself over entirely to prayer; and at the close of the sermon there was a decided move on the part of the unsaved, and some were converted. I still believe that more prayer in the pew would bring more power in the pulpit.

After this we had the work well in hand; and while Brother Pearce (the preacher) had to leave us for a day or two, still we had the Lord with us in power. It was on the following Wednesday, I think, that the writer preached from the text, "Quench not the Spirit," and the word was attended with wonderful power.

Among others who were at the altar that day was a young man named Woodruff, who seemed wonderfully wrought upon by the Divine Spirit, and refused to leave the altar when the service was over and dinner had been announced. We were having two services a day, with dinner on the ground. But young Woodruff seemed perfectly lost or dead to everything else except concern for his own soul, and for this he was in great agony. In the midst of this Brother Mark Pearce came on the church grounds, and some one, reporting the great interest in the meeting to him, asked what could be the matter with Joe Woodruff. Pearce replied: "I know what is the matter with him: he has been quenching the Spirit." Brother Pearce knew nothing as to what the text had been or of its effects more than what had been told him of the meeting in a general way, but he seemed to know the difficulty in Woodruff's case. He was right, as was made known when our young friend became satisfied and informed us that he had felt called to preach, but had been "quenching the Spirit." But after this he embarked in the work of the ministry; and while his advantages had been quite limited, still he lived to be a very useful man, and did some good work as a preacher of the gospel, and has recently gone on to his reward. Joe Woodruff's name will be a household word in many a home for a long, long time yet because of the life that he has lived and the good that he has done. "He being dead yet speaketh."

This meeting swept on to greater victory until many, many sons and daughters were born unto God, and this Church that had been doing almost nothing made the best record on all lines that year of any on the work,

and this great meeting is still talked of by those remaining who witnessed the work. A large number have gone on to their reward in heaven. Among the very best workers in this meeting I now recall the names of Pink Hopkins and his now sainted father, Green Young, the Pearces, and others. I shall never forget their labors with us in the Lord. I am not sure but that Rev. B. R. East, another minister of the gospel, was also a convert of this meeting. Thus the work goes on and multiplies a thousandfold, and the wave for good started in that one little meeting will never stop until the consummation of all things.

Thus was shown the wisdom of concentration and definite work for the salvation of souls rather than denominational strife. Some years later the Church that was dropped reorganized under more favorable circumstances, built a Methodist church, and now stands, I have been told, as one of the leading appointments of the charge. They simply needed a rest and a new order of things. God will not honor such denominational divisions and strife; and having witnessed much of such things along the way, I have felt very much resolved never to contribute money or influence toward building what is called a "union" church or place of worship.

CHAPTER XXX.

Sent to Buena Vista.

Water Valley was the place of our annual gathering this year, and the trip to Conference was made in company with Rev. R. M. Davis and Mr. J. M. Bryant. A more genial companion has never been born than Brother Davis. I have always felt glad when it has fallen to my lot to be associated with this scholarly Christian minister of the gospel—every inch a gentleman—for I always come off the wiser and better for such association. Mr. Bryant is a successful layman in our Church and splendid company. His home is near Pittsboro, Miss. He and his wife are among the preacher's best friends always.

My home at this session of the Conference was at Judge Badley's, with Rev. L. D. Worsham as my roommate. A jolly good fellow is Brother Worsham. I shall never forget how I had to get down on the floor in our room and roll and laugh at Brother Worsham as he would give some of his experiences along the way; and then again he would make me weep and rejoice at intervals as he would relate incidents on other lines and talk of the glorious work of soul-winning. I would be glad to see him and talk with him again now as I pen these lines; think I could gladly stop and spend awhile this way.

The Conference met at the appointed hour, with Bishop Kavanaugh in the chair as president. He or-

dained me to the office of a deacon at this session; and later on, at Columbus, Miss., it was my painful privilege to sit by him as he breathed his last and closed his eyes in death. He was truly a grand man and a great preacher. The Conference moved on with its usual interest. Dr. R. A. Young, of Nashville, was again among the visitors, and addressed the Conference on different subjects. He was at his best; and this is saying a great deal, for he was truly a master of assemblies. Dr. Fitzgerald (now Bishop) was also with us here. It was the first time the writer had met him; but I was particularly drawn to him then, and have had a special fondness for him ever since. These Conference occasions are very helpful to the young preachers—and older ones, too, as for that. "It is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity." When the appointments were announced, my name was read out in connection with the Buena Vista Circuit.

When I reached home from Conference this time, I found that a new baby girl had come to our house; and later we named her Maggie Shell, for Mrs. Dr. Ford (whose maiden name was Shell), in whose home we found a resting place for several weeks until other arrangements could be made for us on the circuit. But little Maggie remained with us only four months, and then went back to God, who gave her. Her little body rests in the soil of this charge to await the resurrection.

Buena Vista was a new charge taken from the old Houston Circuit at this session. Up to this time the work as it had stood had required the services of two preachers, senior and junior, and got preaching every two weeks, though often on week days; but now it

was divided. The Buena Vista work was formed, and each charge had a preacher of its own, with no junior preacher. Five Churches were given to the new circuit thus created—namely, Asbury, Lake Providence. Saul's Chapel, Pleasant Grove, and Macedonia—and they assessed for the preacher in charge three hundred and seventy dollars.

Some of the members were not very well pleased with the division of the work, as they would not get so much preaching; said they would pay but half the amount they had been accustomed to paying on this account. But we went on at an even tenor, having as little to say as possible about these differences, feeling sure that things would adjust themselves when the people became accustomed to the new arrangements; and so they did. The work began to move out very hopefully from the very beginning, for there were some who were very much pleased with the new arrangements, which was helpful in starting. The congregations were usually quite large, and the people seemed pleased with our humble ministrations.

When the time came for our protracted meetings, a great revival wave swept over the entire work, and hundreds were brought into the Church. It was the greatest revival work accomplished in this section for years. So said the oldest citizens. The Lord was truly with his people in great power. So when the reports were footed up for Conference this year I had an excess of seventy dollars for the preacher's salary over the assessments and everything else up in full and running over. Besides this, we had purchased the parsonage, now at Buena Vista, at a cost of eleven hundred dollars, over five hundred dollars of the amount

having been paid in cash and nearly three hundred more paid soon after Conference out of this crop, and the crop short at that. People can usually pay when they are religious.

It is due to the memory of our sainted brother, J. A. McDaniel, for us to state here that he made it possible for the Church to own this house as a home for the preachers. It will be remembered that the assessment for the preacher in charge here for the year now closing was only three hundred and seventy dollars, and the brethren were afraid they wouldn't be able to raise this amount; and hence when the fourth Quarterly Conference passed a resolution to try to raise four hundred dollars for the purpose of building a parsonage at Buena Vista it was regarded as a big undertaking; but a committee of five was appointed to solicit funds and plan for the work. A time was appointed for this committee to meet, but when the time came only two were present; another time was announced, but only two were present; a third meeting was appointed, and only two were present again. These two were J. A. McDaniel and E. W. Jones. McDaniel had guaranteed a hundred dollars for his Church (Asbury) from the beginning, and Brother Jones had secured the promise of sixty-five dollars from Lake Providence; but this was as far as we had gone. Brother McDaniel became discouraged, and said he would come only once more. The distance from his home was thirteen miles, and he was a very busy man always, but never too busy to attend to the Lord's business.

So it began to look like failure, when Rev. J. T. Cunningham, passing through our charge and spending the night with me at Brother Jones's, said: "Kilgore,

buy the Bean house." This is the house we did buy. I asked him what it would cost. He said they asked twelve hundred dollars for it, but he thought it could be bought for a thousand, to which I replied that it would look like folly to try to secure a thousand dollars in a territory where we had failed to get a committee to meet to discuss the feasibility of collecting four hundred dollars and solicit contributions thereto; but Brother Cunningham, rather jestingly, kept speaking of the matter.

Next day (Sunday) at my appointment I spoke of Cunningham's suggestion to some, and found that the people would be willing to subscribe double their amount if the above-named property could be secured. So I began at once to take subscriptions for this purpose, and by the following Saturday morning was ready to meet the committee with a subscription of more than seven hundred dollars to be added to the amounts already mentioned. When Brother McDaniel saw the subscription list, he said it was "gilt-edged," walked over and closed the trade with Mr. Bean in a few minutes for a consideration of eleven hundred dollars, and on the following Saturday came with the money in full to pay for the place; but we met him with nearly five hundred dollars of the amount collected on the subscription, including the hundred he stood for for his Church, and so he paid the balance and trusted the subscription for the replacement of the money; and for twenty years this has been the preacher's home. This shows the value of one good man in a community when consecrated with his means to the cause of Christ. Brother McDaniel was a tower of strength for the Church in this charge; and we

think he has left a faithful representative in the person of his son-in-law, Mr. Barnett. He seems to have taken up his mantle; and so the Church continues to flourish.

This year the Conference met at Columbus; and again I failed to stand the examination. This time I was before the committee, but they could not pass me, as I was not prepared on the studies; but again I brought up the two years at the next Conference, and so lost no time. This was the most spiritual Conference I had ever attended. Dr. J. W. Lambuth, who had spent so many years as missionary in China, was present, and impressed the Conference with his words of wisdom. Governor Colquitt, of Georgia, was also with us, and made a fine impression on the body as the great man that he was. But the thing that impressed me most, and probably proved the greatest good to all, was Dr. J. B. McFerrin's great sermon, on Sunday, on the "Witness of the Spirit." There were such continued demonstrations of divine power, even after the great preacher had concluded his sermon, that the presiding bishop could scarcely find a time to ordain the deacons. My home while here was with Brother J. G. Shull, a Cumberland Presbyterian, and I remember my stay there very pleasantly.

I was reappointed to the Buena Vista Circuit, and received the appointment very gratefully, as I now knew that I not only had an excellent people to serve, but would be in the hands of one of the best boards of stewards that ever graced a Methodist Quarterly Conference. With such men as J. A. McDaniel, M. E. Spraggins, E. W. Jones, W. A. Mayfield, J. S. Henley, D. S. Rhodes, R. W. King, and Dr. J. R. Ford to look

to for advice and support, one could not feel otherwise than safe, besides the hope of building on the foundation already laid.

Of course we moved into the new parsonage soon after my return, and one of the first notable things that occurred was the advent of our first baby boy. He was so highly appreciated that we named him Amos Kendall for our presiding elder; and he still lives, now a noble young man, a great comfort to my life, and, with others God has given me, the hope of my old age.

Another very successful year is spent. New friendships are formed and old ones strengthened, and we are off to Conference again, this time at Grenada.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Buena Vista Again.

I was accompanied to Conference this time by two young ladies—my wife's sister, Miss Sallie Davis, and Miss Alice Jones, a daughter of one of my stewards—and on the return trip we were joined by my little brother-in-law, Rev. R. H. Davis, who died two years later during the session of the Conference, where he would have been ordained elder; but he had gone to join the "general assembly of the firstborn."

The Conference here was marked by many interesting events; but time fails us to write of all these things. Rev. E. B. Ramsey was our Conference host, and to know he had charge was to be assured of royal entertainment, and this we had. Every one seemed pleased with his home. My home was at Brother Dubard's, by request. I appreciated this compliment very much, as it is an honor to be entertained in such a home as his. One noteworthy thing at this session was Dr. Steel's powerful sermon on "The Preacher's Mission." It approximated, if it did not equal, the occasion referred to when Dr. McFerrin preached at the Columbus Conference. Dr. Steel was elected delegate to the General Conference next day on the first ballot.

At this Conference I was ordained elder by Bishop Paine, and the following year performed the solemn rite of serving as one of the pallbearers at his funer-

al. The Lord takes away his workmen, but carries on his work. I had been in Bishop Paine's home frequently during his last years, and always felt that it was a benediction to be in his presence; hence I felt personally bereaved when he was taken from us.

I was again returned to my former charge, Buena Vista, and was again thankful. The year's work started off in the usual way; but as early as in February a revival broke out at a regular appointment at Macedonia. It was a dark, drizzly day; but the work was followed up at once, resulted in an ingathering of thirty-one souls, several heads of families being among the number, and the work abides. The meeting was truly historic. The people were busy and the weather unsettled, but the meeting swept on to victory as above recorded. If we would always follow divine indications rather than wait for a set time in the summer, we might succeed better. With such a start as the above, one would easily suppose that it would be a good year with us; and so it was. The revival fire again burned on every altar, and many were added to the Church.

One other meeting is worthy of special mention. On the fourth Sunday in June we began a meeting, as previously appointed, at a schoolhouse near McCondy. The plan, however, was to meet on Monday and build an arbor; but there was a Baptist church near by, and at the close of our service Sunday night the members of that Church (some of the leaders) came to us and asked why we couldn't hold our meeting in their church, and insisted that we do so. After a brief conference among ourselves, we agreed to do this. It was so announced; and on Monday we assembled in

the Baptist church, and continued until Friday night with very good interest, their people taking part and sharing in the results of the work.

On Friday night we were, as we thought, honored with the presence of one of their ministers. I went to him at once to assure him of our pleasure in having him with us, and thus bid him welcome; but after telling me he regretted that he could not remain even through the service, he asked the privilege of making an announcement. So when the people were all in, the house being crowded, and just before our preacher would have announced his text, I arose and stated that the brother was present and desired to make an announcement, and that we had waited till then that all the people might hear. He came to the front and stated that he only wished to announce a conference there on the following Saturday; that everything done legitimately in the Baptist Church had to be done through the Church Conference, and anything done otherwise was out of order; that in some way the Methodist people had come in and taken charge of their house of worship; that he didn't know why we had done this unless it was through ignorance, and that he hoped if such were the case we would now make some other arrangement. In the meantime my assisting brother had slipped out of the pulpit. When the brother was through with his harangue, he called the audience to prayer, and repeated part of his speech in his prayer, referring to our ignorance. With his hat in his hand all this time, he arose from his knees and went rapidly down the aisle and out. But as he was retiring I called to him, asking him to remain until I could explain to him why we were there, to which

he replied, "Not to me, Brother Kilgore, but to the people," and was gone.

As a matter of course there was nothing left for us to do but, as he said, to make other arrangements; and so having stated to the people publicly how we came to be there, and appealing to the Baptists present who had invited us, I asked all who would meet next morning to prepare an arbor to stand, and about thirty stood. I then asked all who would go that night to the schoolhouse, half a mile away, for a service to stand, and the whole congregation stood. We went and held the service. I preached. Brother Smith said he couldn't. My text was "God so loved the world," etc.; and at the close we invited penitents and had two conversions.

Next morning the brethren met, built the arbor, and had it ready by eleven o'clock. The meeting continued two weeks, and there were nearly a hundred additions to the Church. The Baptists of the community, at least many of them, didn't approve of that brother's course. The meeting hadn't ended before we had secured a sufficient amount in cash and good subscriptions to build a Methodist church; and Ebenezer Church now stands as a monument to that work. Dr. Ford suggested that we must name the church Ebenezer—"Hitherto the Lord has brought us." For nearly twenty years this has been a place of worship. The Baptists, inspired by this good work, improved their church; so the community now has two good houses of worship, and the Baptists and Methodists are on the best of terms. So maybe agitation is better than stagnation after all.

Altogether the work on the Buena Vista Circuit

during these years had been both pleasant and profitable. In all this work recorded Rev. J. L. Guinn, a local preacher, whose name has not been hitherto mentioned, had rendered very valuable service. He and many others of the workers named in this chapter have gone to their reward. They now rest from their labors and their works do follow them. Many of the events of interest in this pastorate cannot be recorded here, but will be better known at the revelation of all things. Our work closes here, and we go up to roll call again to receive our marching orders for another year.

It may not be amiss to mention here before closing that as many as five ministers of the gospel now filling important charges were converted and received into the Church on this work during these years.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The General Conference and Else.

It was during this last year on the Buena Vista Circuit, in May, 1882, that I enjoyed the privilege of attending the General Conference at Nashville, Tenn., in the new McKendree Church, where I met our representative men from all our borders, and also witnessed some of the workings of our great Publishing House and visited the Vanderbilt University and other points of interest. Everything here impressed me with the greatness of our Zion.

As my father and mother were Carolinians, I deemed it a great privilege to be invited to dine with the South Carolina delegation and make the acquaintance of Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Duncan, Drs. Carlisle, Darbe, and others. I heard great speeches from Drs. Carlisle, Peterson, Redford, McFerrin, Whitehead, Sledd, and others, and for the first time saw together all our bishops then living, though these have all crossed the river since. I was especially impressed with Bishop George F. Pierce, who would sit on the rostrum with his eyes closed, and seem extremely feeble; but when some interest of the Church would stir him, he would spring to his feet and pour forth such a volume of eloquence as I had never before heard. He was truly a great man.

One of the biggest and best things I heard, however, was Dr. Haygood's sermon at Elm Street Church on

Sunday morning from Ephesians iii. 14-20. While he was preaching Brother Kendall twisted and turned, and finally said: "Glory to God!" And Gilderoy came around after the congregation was dismissed, and as he choked up and swallowed he said, "Kendall, I believe I'll quit," intimating that he couldn't preach after hearing Haygood. The music at this church was very fine. It was the following week that Drs. Haygood, Wilson, Granbery, Parker, and Hargrove were elected to the episcopacy; but Dr. Haygood declined ordination, as he had charge of a school in Georgia he thought more important. He was reëlected, however, at a subsequent General Conference, and accepted, since the hindrances had been removed. I enjoyed the interest taken in these elections very much. I especially noted the interest the Vanderbilt boys took in the election of Dr. Granbery, as he was at the time one of their professors.

Here, too, I met with the honorable representatives elect of Tennessee, and heard them discuss questions of vital interest to the State, as their Legislature was in session. A company of us also found some amusement in climbing to the top of the Statehouse to get a view of the city and surrounding country. These were all new experiences, and hence enjoyed the more. I also for the first time attended high mass at the Catholic church, and was in their services every morning for a week. It is quite interesting indeed to a stranger to see a large church crowded to overflowing every morning at sunrise with worshipers; but such is the case with the Catholics. At different times I was compelled to stand in the aisle at this early hour for lack of room. The decorum practiced among Catholics

is very impressive. They never turn to look at any one coming in, nor in any way do anything to detract from the worship. I have wondered what the feelings of a Roman Catholic would be on coming into one of our Protestant congregations and noting the chitchat that is usually indulged in by our people and, worse still, the misbehavior that sometimes exists. It may be said that they worship the tangible, which is in a measure true; but it would be quite an improvement if our people would practice a little more reverence for the house of God. Our Bishop Marvin used to lift his hat when passing a country chapel. This may have looked a little extreme, but better this than too much the other way.

I found enough in that Conference to make me a stronger Methodist and a better Christian, and on my return trip had the pleasure of visiting the Memphis Conference Female Institute at Jackson, Tenn., and of spending a night with the now sainted Dr. Amos Jones. It was beautiful to see how that great company of girls loved and honored Dr. Jones and to witness the splendid work they were doing. I certainly returned to my charge much better equipped than ever before for the work committed to me. It is well for young preachers and people to take in such things when they can do so conveniently.

Here I had another taste of the mixture of life's experiences, however, as on the very day of my return my faithful horse, one of the very best I ever owned, took sick and died suddenly, and thus left me afoot for the remainder of the year. But later in the year my members expressed their sympathy for me by making up a purse with which to buy me another horse.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Entering upon the Sixth Year in the Ministry.

Our third year on the Buena Vista Circuit and our fifth year in the Conference had closed; and although our official board had asked for our return for the fourth year, we had been assured by our presiding elder that this would not be done. Indications pointed very strongly to the probability of our being sent to the western part of the Conference territory for another year; and as we were not as well acquainted with the workings of Methodist Conference machinery as we became later, we moved part of our household goods to my father-in-law's, twenty-two miles in the direction of where we supposed we would go, before the Conference convened. Not that we were anxious ourselves to leave our old charge; but, as already stated, we had been assured that we would not be returned, and were willing to move if thought best. It will not be hard for the reader to imagine how we felt after Conference, when we found it necessary to move those same goods right back by our old parsonage gate in reaching our new charge; but one thing we had learned, however, and that was never to begin to move again until we had some definite idea as to where we were going. The Conference this time held its session at Corinth, and it was my extreme pleasure to be accompanied by my wife, as she had never attended with me before. Bishop McTyeire presided,

to the delight of every one. Here we first met and heard Dr. Morton, first Secretary of our Church Extension Board, who afterwards held this office in the Church until he went to his home in heaven. He was truly a consecrated man and did a great work for the Church. We were given a very pleasant home at this Conference, and enjoyed the session very much indeed; but when the appointments were read out and my name was announced for the Columbus Circuit, we were very greatly surprised, and I may say disappointed, as it was so different from what I had expected. Of course we knew nothing of Columbus Circuit; but, as above indicated, we had planned to go elsewhere. In obedience to orders, however, we were soon on the work to which we had been appointed. As there was again no parsonage, I made the first trip alone to prepare the way. On this preparatory trip at least four men gave me ten dollars apiece as quarterage, stating that it was their custom to pay their preacher this amount at their first meeting after Conference. These were soon followed by others with similar amounts. Of course this was quite encouraging, and we didn't regret so much after all that we were assigned to this circuit. Besides this, while there was no parsonage, we were invited at once to Capt. George W. Vaughn's, where we could have a boarding place until something else opened up for us, and we remained in this pleasant home three months or more at very reasonable rates. We found it perfectly delightful here; but as they had agreed to keep us only until we could easily make other arrangements, and as there were other places now open, we thought it but proper and right to change; so after spending a little

time with some of our members, we moved to Columbus and rented part of a house with Elder Hatch, of the Baptist Church, who afterwards became a successful evangelist. We found Brother Hatch and his amiable Christian wife very pleasant indeed, and remained with them the remainder of the year. In the meantime we had purchased a parsonage in Columbus at a cost of one thousand dollars; but it was rented for the year, and hence we had to make this other arrangement.

Among the other pleasant things that happened to us this year was an extended visit from my dear mother, who spent three months with us, this being the only time she had ever spent any time with us in our own home.

I had soon become extensively acquainted on the work and in the town of Columbus, and found many people who were as true and noble in every particular as any I had ever met, and learned to love them dearly. Among these were Rev. John Eggar and family, Willie Verner and family, Dr. Ervin and family, Dr. Hutcheson and family, the Vaughn connection, the Coxes, the Leeches, the Harrises, and many others. The Lord blessed us greatly in our work every way, and a great number were added to the Church. Two conversions are worthy of note—those of Bob Sharp and Frank Rowen, both heads of families. I called at Sharp's home to make them a pastoral visit on one Monday, after having preached at the church near him on the day before, and found him working in new ground and under very deep conviction. I prayed with him there in the field, he was happily converted, a consequent service was announced for

the church that night, a meeting was begun, and much good accomplished. This was at Dr. Ervin's church, where that great woman, Mrs. Ervin, lived and worked, and hence it was not to be wondered at that such things as the above should occur. Frank Rowen, the other convert mentioned, had been a tough sinner and hard to reach, yet his friends seemed specially interested in him. I spent one Saturday night with him at the beginning of a meeting near his home, and on Sunday morning after breakfast I asked him to take a walk with me. After we had strolled a considerable distance into the woods and down into a deep hollow, I began talking to him about his soul and engaged in prayer with him. During the prayer he was powerfully converted, and there was a big meeting when we returned to the house where his wife and mother were. I am not informed as to how Brother Sharp has held out, but Rowen has served as a faithful steward in the Church ever since, and will work and pray whenever called on. Many other incidents of this year were noteworthy, but we cannot record them here.

It was this year, on July 10, that the Lord gave us our second boy. We named him James Sykes, for an honored citizen of Columbus by this name. The dear boy has been spared to us, is now a young man twenty-two years old, and is developing into a lovely character, loved by all who know him.

Conference convened this year at Oxford, of which we could find much to write about, but must pass over. We were returned to the Columbus Circuit for another year, and were soon domiciled in our new parsonage. Except for a good deal of sickness in

our home this year, it would have been one of the most pleasant of all. Even with this many things will ever be remembered with the fondest of recollections. For the first time, however, owing to this great amount of sickness, our salary failed to meet our current expenses, and we were left in debt at the end of the year; but this was no fault of the people of the charge, as they had paid their assessments in full, as usual. After two successful years thus spent, however, we were off to Conference again, this time at Aberdeen, of which I shall write in my next chapter. During my last year at Columbus our little daughter was happily converted at six years of age, and two years later united with the Church.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Open Doors.

Allusion has already been made to my call to the evangelistic work, and it might be interesting to the reader to know something more as to the nature of this call and the leadings of Providence which followed. I have mentioned in another chapter something of the strange pressure that seemed to be upon me or the mysterious cloud under which I seemed to be passing—an experience I could not, then understand, nor can I now explain as to how it was. I would not like to have to be called through a similar experience again. There was no special visible cause for this, either. I was enjoying a good degree of success in the pastorate and was very happy in my work. Still, there seemed to be some leadings I had not sought. Up to this time I had seen but one evangelist, so called, nor had I ever heard of Sam Jones and his associates, and had no definite idea of that sort of work. It was in my study one day, in the parsonage at Columbus, while I was on my knees engaged in the most earnest prayer, feeling that there was something ahead of me I had not yet known, begging God to make known his will to me, that it came to me as a revelation that I would be called out into the special line of work above indicated. The whole field seemed spread out before me for this—and that, too, when I had not thought of such a thing before.

True, I had already engaged in some successful meetings with my brethren in the pastorate on adjoining works, but had never been called out any distance from home. So when this impression came I told the Lord in this continued prayer that if this was his will to make it plain to me by opening doors for me, and I would try to respond to the calls or follow where he would lead me. I continued in a spirit of prayer during the remainder of the day and the wakeful hours of the night, asking God to lead me where he would have me go, as the question seemed settled as to the certainty that this would be my work.

Next morning I went to the post office with a feeling of assurance that there would be a letter of invitation there for me. I seemed to be as certain of this as if I had already opened the letter and read it. I can never forget it. When I reached the office and opened my box, sure enough there was a letter from Carrollton, Miss., a distance then of three hundred miles by rail, as I would have to go by Meridian and Jackson, this being the nearest route by rail at that time from Columbus to Carrollton. The invitation was very urgent, and the time was only a few days ahead. Could any one have doubted the divine hand in the matter? Why could not Brother Smith have secured help nearer home at less cost? And why these impressions on my mind just at this time? These and many other questions passed through my mind in considering the thing. Then I didn't have the money for such a trip, and it was a scarce time of the year, too, when I would need every cent that might come to me from the circuit to meet current expenses at home, and so I didn't know how these things could be adjusted;

but without the money, and not knowing where it would come from, I wrote Brother Smith I would come, trusting God for help in the matter.

We had boarding with us two young ladies, who were attending school. The mother of one of the girls had given us a milch cow as part pay for her daughter's board, and I had agreed with the father of the other to wait until the following fall for the money; so there was no help in sight from this source. Saturday morning had come, and the weather was excessively cold, and the following Monday evening was the time for me to start to Carrollton in order to be on time for the appointed meeting. I left home for my appointments in the country on Saturday evening, and had one of the coldest rides I have ever experienced during a ministry of more than a quarter of a century. On Sunday I had no congregations at either place I had to visit, owing to the continued cold. So Sunday night had come, and nothing had been done, and there was nothing in sight as to preparation for the contemplated trip. I spent the night at the home of the father of one of our schoolgirls. On Monday morning he said to me that he didn't know what my financial condition was, but supposed I might be like most other preachers, without an excess of money, and that as he had some on hand he would have no special use for he had decided that if it would suit me he would pay his daughter's board bill in full, and paid me in advance for the entire session. So I had more money than I had had before in quite a little while. I rode home, a distance of fifteen miles, and arranged to start to Carrollton that afternoon.

During the two weeks I was at Carrollton God set

his seal on the work by giving us a very great victory. Many were saved, and a large number were added to the Church. I returned to Columbus in time to attend a meeting conducted by Rev. J. A. Bowen, and was most favorably impressed with him as a man who seemed to have power with God and with men. His faith in God's promises was remarkable. I had hardly filled my engagement on my own charge before there was an invitation for me to go to Starkville for a similar work. The now sainted Dr. Hoyt, of the Presbyterian Church, was there conducting a meeting in his own church while our meeting was in progress; but the two meetings moved on with the greatest harmony, and great victory crowned the work. Rev. J. S. Oakley, who has recently gone to his reward, was our pastor here, and was one of my warmest friends during the remainder of his life.

In less than two weeks after this meeting had closed two letters came to me from Ripley, Miss.—one from the pastor, Rev. D. L. Cogdell, and the other from Rev. Amos Kendall, presiding elder of the district—both inviting me to a meeting at that place to be held in conjunction with the District Conference. I prayed over the matter until it was made plain to me that I should go (this was fully a week after I had received the invitation), and then I wrote these brethren that I would come, which I did through many difficulties. In fact, the question was presented as to whether I should have gone or not. I need not take time here to mention this chain of apparent difficulties, but will say that with the assistance and prayers of my loved ones at home and other help of the Holy Ghost I was on time at the meeting, and from the first service God

signalized his presence by pouring out great blessings upon us in convicting, converting, and reclaiming power. Some of the most powerful conversions I have ever witnessed were the results of this meeting, one old infidel being among the first. This was Dr. Carter, who was at the time President of the State Board of Health. His first public demonstration in the direction of becoming a Christian was to stand up in the congregation and state that he had for the past thirty-five years stood on the streets of that town as well as in other places and "spouted away his infidelity and probably poisoned the minds of many young people and older ones" with his views. I have here given his exact language. A few hours later in another service he stood and thanked God that he had gotten back on the right track, and said he didn't expect to "switch off any more." He immediately took a decided stand for the right and became an earnest worker in the meeting; and remained faithful to the day of his death, as I have been informed. His conversion was followed by a great turning to the Lord in the town and community on the part of a great number of people. John Falkner and Charlie Thurman, both lawyers, were among the first who made public profession. Thus the work went on until a very great victory had been scored for Christ and the Church.

I returned to my people and charge with feelings of gratitude to God for his great grace bestowed upon us in these meetings, and especially for the salvation of these precious souls. He chooses whomsoever he will to accomplish his work. "To his name be all the glory and praise both now and forever. Amen."

CHAPTER XXXV.

Revival at Home.

One other meeting during my pastorate at Columbus deserves special mention. It was a meeting at our old home church. I had gone back to accompany my mother on her return trip from our home. The people of my charge had voted me two weeks' vacation, hence I had some Sundays at home. There was no appointment for me, however, as my coming was not known; but I attended Sunday school on Sunday morning and preached to those who were present, and, by request, announced another service for the night, and at this service announced for one week. At the end of this week there had been sixteen conversions among the Sunday school children. I had planned to close on Sunday night. At this service the sermon had been preached and the call made for penitents, and I was just ready to pronounce the benediction when Brother Hampton, whose memory we all cherish, arose and said, "Brother Elias, I wouldn't close this meeting," to which I replied that I thought the congregation expected it to close, but if they desired it to be continued I could remain another week if necessary. Brother Hampton then suggested that we test the matter by a rising vote, and when this was done we found the vote unanimous in favor of continuing the work; and the wisdom of this was seen in the future services.

On the following morning the writer preached a

sermon on "Brotherly Love," which seemed to make a profound impression on the minds of those who heard. At the night service the "Choice of Jesus or Barabbas" was presented as the subject of the discourse. The Lord was with his servant in the ministry of the word at this service in a special manner, and when the call was made for seekers there was a ready response and the altar was soon crowded with weeping penitents, and there had soon been six happy conversions, all grown young men of prominent families. The writer has scarcely ever witnessed such a religious demonstration as was witnessed that night. Leading men and women. representing different Churches, shouted God's praises aloud, and this was continued quite a while. I remember especially one accomplished and attractive young lady who ran down one aisle to the door in the large church and back the other to the altar, shouting at every bound, who would never have dreamed of doing such a thing on an ordinary occasion. But such scenes have often been witnessed when the power of the Lord was upon his people. Thus it was at Pentecost, according to the record, and thus has it ever been since. With this evidence of God's presence in the work and inspired by the conversion of these young men, we began with increased earnestness to save the community, and the work was pushed until nearly seventy souls had been brought into the kingdom. Of this number there were twenty-seven heads of families, some of them being among the leading representatives of the community and the county. I felt very grateful to God for his great mercy in giving us this victory, as this was the home of my childhood and where I had spent many of my school days.

Many of the converts of this meeting were my old schoolmates and associates of childhood and youth. The good old class leader, who had been faithful for years when there was but little to encourage, was sick at the time of this meeting and could not attend. He was extremely ill and not expected to live; but when he heard the good news of this great work from time to time as it progressed, he was heard to say: "'Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.'" This meeting closed.

I was again back on my work, and was soon off for Conference.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

West Point and Tibbee.

During our first year on the Buena Vista Circuit, five years before the events to be recorded in this chapter, a great shadow was cast over our home by the death of Dr. Davis, my wife's father. But we were greatly comforted in the fact that his death was triumphant. Among his last words, when his son told him he was dying, were: "If I am dying, this is the brightest day of my life." But we were again called to "pass under the rod." The Conference in 1884 met in Aberdeen. We had closed our second year on the Columbus Circuit, and during the closing months I had been called home to the bedside of my mother, who was thought to be in a dying condition. After spending four days with her, I kissed her good-by, feeling that I would hardly see her again this side the last river; but she lingered so long that I had hoped to possibly see her again, and I had planned to hand in my report at the earliest possible convenience, and then go home. On the afternoon before the Conference convened a telegram was handed me announcing the death of my preacher brother-in-law, who would have been ordained elder at this Conference. Of course this was a great shock to us, and while I yet had this telegram in my hand our home preacher informed me that they had buried my mother on the preceding Friday. I never passed through a

sadder season in my life. Friends were meeting and greeting on every side, but I stood in the midst of all feeling as lonely as if I had been a thousand miles from any one. In the midst of this a gentleman came to me and said a young lady friend of mine was dying at a certain home on a certain street, dying without hope, and had sent for me to come and pray with her. The afflictions which had just come to me had probably prepared me better for successfully leading her to Christ, as she professed saving faith in Christ and left a bright testimony that she had gone to rest. Besides the comfort I found in thus helping one at such a time, mother had said to me when I was leaving her last: "Go on, my precious boy, and preach the gospel and meet me in heaven." All this gave me comfort in sorrow.

I was entertained during this Conference in the home of Col. Anderson Bean, and was treated very kindly indeed. At the close of the session I was read out for West Point and Tibbee. This was my first station work. I was soon on the ground, and met with a welcome on every hand. The first Sunday I was greeted by large congregations morning and evening. The people probably came—many of them at least—more to hear the new preacher than anything else; but the Lord was with us and gave us two good services, and I received many words of encouragement from different sources. Just here an incident occurred which may be worthy of note. There was a move on foot to circulate a petition among the citizens of West Point favoring "local option," as West Point was then cursed with the open saloon. I was waited on by representatives from other Churches,

asking me to work for the cause, especially among my own people, which I would gladly have done, even though yet a stranger to most of them; but my arrangements had already been made to visit the old home to see my brothers and sisters, that we might comfort each other in the great loss we had so recently sustained. The friends of whisky took advantage of this in trying to make it appear that I was not in sympathy with this prohibition movement; and when I returned to my charge, after an absence of a week, I was met by this report on every hand. But I was boarding where one of the saloon men was staying. I took pains to make myself understood thoroughly, and repeatedly I spoke as being in full sympathy with any measure that looked to the closing up of his place of business as well as all other such places, and in this I had the full indorsement of his own father, mother, and wife. So I thought with this, besides being outspoken on the streets and in every place on this question, my position would certainly be understood from this on. A few days later a note was sent to the parsonage, with fifty dollars inclosed, stating that, having heard that I was contemplating a visit to the New Orleans Exposition, they asked the privilege of defraying my expenses on the trip, and signed themselves "Many Friends." Of course I readily concluded that this gift was from my Church and was rejoicing in the fact. We had some company at the parsonage to witness all this. In a few minutes there was another tap on the front door, and two brethren, both representing other Churches, stood before me when the door was opened, and stated that they had understood that the whisky men had made me up a purse for

not having taken any stock in the whisky fight. I told them that I had just received a note signed "Many Friends," which I had supposed to be from my Church, containing an amount of money, and was rejoicing over it, but that if the whisky men had sent it as represented I would most certainly return it to them before I slept. I at once took the note containing the money, walked down on the street, met some of the saloon keepers, informed them of what I had heard, and offered them the money, if such were true. But they disavowed any such purpose, declared they knew me to be a prohibitionist, said they had only joined others in what some of them gave in sending me a token of friendship, and insisted that I should keep the money in this light, which I did. When I reached New Orleans I visited Bishop Keener's home and related the whole story to him, and he heartily approved my whole course in the matter. I was then, and have ever afterwards been, pronounced against the open saloon or the sale of whisky in any form, unless strictly for medicinal purposes, and I have always thought there could be a substitute for this. Many more people are destroyed by it than were ever saved. Dr. Brooks, in a temperance lecture, represented whisky by the figure of a black river. He stood on the banks of this river and saw it full of men of every age and station in life, drifting downward into darkness impenetrable. He saw on each side of this river churches with their spires pointing heavenward, suggesting eternal life to the passer-by, with men and women engaged in pulling these men and boys and sometimes women out of this black river and housing them in these churches for security or

safety; but the river was still full, and frequently those who had been rescued for a time could be seen back in this river of death. So he thought he would go up the stream and find where the trouble was; and when he had reached the fountain, he saw strong, rough men laying hands on an innocent boy, just ready to plunge him into this awful river, while possibly a poor woman might be seen raising her hands in agony, saying: "O God! Gentlemen, hands off. That's my poor boy, the hope of my old age." They would hesitate for a moment, apparently in sympathy with this woman, and then say: "Get away, woman. We don't care for your boy. It's just the money we are after. If it wasn't for the money, we wouldn't do this." Those men represent the saloon men and the evils attending the saloon. No wonder Dr. Brooks said: "Let us stop up the fountain and dry up the stream. This is prohibition." Let the saloon go, but save the boys. I am glad it has ever been my privilege to raise my voice against this nefarious business; and if I should fail to do this and one of my boys or any one I love were to go down under its influence, I would feel like rebuking myself the remainder of my days. But we pass for the present to other questions.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

West Point and Tibbee (Continued).

Soon after the events recorded in the preceding chapter we began a meeting in our church at West Point, which lasted four weeks, and resulted in adding more than forty names to our roll of membership. This was said to have been the first revival of any note here since the ministry of Rev. D. C. Brown. The day our meeting closed the Cumberland Presbyterians began a meeting, and continued three weeks, with Rev. Mr. Eichelberger as their leader. Rev. J. M. Keeton was pastor of the Church, however, and was in good favor with his people. The results of their work were very good. Two days before they closed the Baptist meeting began. Rev. Dr. Miller was in the lead. Elder Naufsinger was in charge of the Church. They had a large ingathering of souls, with much good accomplished in every way. After two weeks' suspension, Dr. Hoyt, Presbyterian evangelist from Nashville, Tenn., began a similar work in their Church here, and continued two weeks, with good results. So we had had in all twelve weeks' meetings, with only one little gap; and large gains had been made by all the Churches. It will be remembered that the work began with us, and I threw myself, with such of my membership as I could control, into all the other meetings mentioned, and as a result there was at the end a better spirit among

the Churches here than had existed in a long time, if ever before; and our increase had been equal to any other one of the denominations represented. The Sunday schools had all been strengthened, and religion in general was at high tide. I found the associate pastors (whose names are given above) to be very pleasant companions in the work indeed, and we learned to love each other in the Lord during this campaign against sin.

At the conclusion of all these special efforts we decided that it was a good time to agitate the question of building a parsonage in this charge. So I began at once to solicit subscriptions to this enterprise, and had soon purchased a lot and had a house in process of construction at a cost of fifteen hundred dollars, including the lot at three hundred dollars, which building was completed and ready for occupancy at the opening of the following Conference year.

During this year the writer had assisted in very gracious revivals of religion at Batesville, Sardis, Oxford, and Iuka—all in this Conference. Quite a number of very interesting events might be mentioned here as being connected with these meetings, but I forbear more than to say that at three of the places mentioned, taken together, there were nearly four hundred conversions and about three hundred additions to our own Zion.

In the closing up of this first year at West Point there was added to our own family a sweet little girl baby. We named her Scottie Mariah, for Mrs. Dr. Scott, of this place; but little Scottie remained with us only ten months, and then returned to God, who had given her to us, and we began to realize the more

that our treasures were being taken from us here and transplanted in the beautiful home beyond; and "where our treasure is, there are our hearts also."

The Church at Tibbee had prospered greatly this year, and we had added one new congregation east of Tibbee, which they were pleased to call Kilgore's Chapel. With this addition a new work was formed, called Tibbee Circuit, and West Point was left alone to support a preacher of its own, and thereafter be called a station. Thus the year rounded up and we were off for Conference.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Conference Again.

Kosciusko was the seat of the Conference this year, and the writer was entertained in the home of Brother John Riley, who, with his wife and three accomplished daughters, made us feel quite at home. In fact, we were never better cared for than here. Rev. A. J. Foster was also a guest in this home with others, and where Jack Foster stayed there was never a dull time. Rev. J. A. Bowen was our Conference host, and right royally did he entertain us. Bishop Hargrove was with us as President, and soon convinced us that he was the right man in the right place. The Conference was in every particular a great occasion. By a previously planned effort the writer secured the next session of the Conference for West Point, and was returned to West Point for another year. The only sad feature was the loss of Tibbee from the charge this time, as it had been set off in a separate charge, as was stated in a former chapter. I never expect to serve a more noble set of people in this world than are to be found at Tibbee; but the change had been so ordered, and we must yield to the inevitable.

On my return from Conference we moved at once into the new parsonage, now ready for occupancy. During the first week we called a meeting of the board of stewards of this now new station, consisting

of J. W. Hicks, W. C. White, Judge F. A. Critz, B. F. McCrary, J. H. Saunders, B. L. Smith, R. C. McDaniel—a noble body of men indeed—who fixed the pastor's salary this year at eight hundred dollars, this being a hundred dollars more than they had been paying with Tibbee's help, which was good help—and all this, too, with a good parsonage to live in. Thus the new year started off quite hopefully, and we were not to be disappointed. Early in the year, with the assistance of Rev. J. A. Bowen, than whom one could have no better help, we embarked in a meeting, which proved the best of our pastorate at this place. The material added was such as to greatly strengthen the charge in a financial way as well as otherwise. Brother Bowen will never live to do better preaching than he did during this meeting, and he witnessed these glorious results.

It was during this last year in this charge that I finished reading the Bible through on my knees. Earlier in my ministry I had read the biographies of Dr. Adam Clarke, Bishop Bascom, Bishop McKendree, and others, which inspired me to try to emulate their examples, especially that of Bishop McKendree in this particular—to read the Bible through on my knees in prayer, praying at the end of every five or six verses. When I had thus finished the last chapter and verse in Revelation, I found that I had been greatly benefited spiritually as well as otherwise by this experience, and among some of the other special benefits derived was a love for the Holy Scriptures. I began to feel that I could adopt the language of inspiration itself: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Our District Conference this year was at South Union Camp Ground, in conjunction with the camp meeting, and was a great occasion. Rev. Dr. Cameron was our very efficient presiding elder. Up to this date in my ministry I had attended District Conferences at Houston, Pontotoc, Verona, Shuqualak, Grenada, and Sturgis, and this last at South Union, and they all proved very helpful occasions to all present. Three of them were made occasions of protracted services, in which the writer of these sketches was invited to take part—namely, at Houston, Pontotoc, and Verona —and at all three of these places we enjoyed gracious outpourings of the Divine Spirit and many were added to the Church. I had also during all this time assisted in meetings, not hitherto mentioned, at Aberdeen, Egypt, Columbus, Baldwyn, and other places, where the Lord was pleased to honor the work with the presence and power of his Spirit in the salvation of souls and the resuscitation of the Church. Thus the way was being paved for even greater and more extended work in the future; but of all this we shall write later.

I ought probably to note one incident of this pastorate, which required a good deal of moral courage on my part. Our house of worship here was located quite conveniently to the town, and it had possibly for this reason become a custom to use it on all occasions for lectures and public meetings of various kinds, and this was kept up notwithstanding there were other rooms convenient for such purposes—the courthouse, the opera house, and White's Hall. Still our church was used because it was free. I could never approve of this at any time, as I always felt that a house dedicated to the worship of God ought to be kept exclu-

sively for this purpose, and any other use made of it would be a desecration. The time of which I shall now write seemed especially so. We were engaged in a revival meeting, with three services a day—morning, afternoon, and night—and the interest was very good indeed. People were being added to the Church daily. Some one who evidently did not feel very much interest in our cause, without consulting any of the official members of the Church or the pastor, announced a lecture to occupy one of our hours for public worship—and that, too, by an unknown person, who was reported to be going through the country lecturing to the colored people on the subject of prohibition, but who had been invited to deliver his lecture to the white people of West Point. It could never be ascertained just who had extended this invitation. When the train which was to have brought the speaker came, it was found that he had not come, which pleased some of us, as we did not wish to be troubled in any way just at that particular time. But the next day, to our astonishment, a prominent speaker was announced for the same hour a day ahead and again for our church, and all the time it was known generally that our meeting was in session, with a good degree of interest manifested on the part of the unsaved. To render the matter more embarrassing, this time the speaker represented one of the leading denominations and was of State reputation. He would have been accorded a hearty welcome by all if the meeting had not been on with such a large interest manifested. But notwithstanding this, and the additional fact that none of our own members seemed to know where this arrangement originated, still, to

avoid the appearance of opposing a good cause, I announced the lecture, as requested, and gave up my service for the hour. The speaker made a good talk, but told a goodly number of amusing anecdotes, which of course would detract from the interest of the meeting; and, to the astonishment of at least one member of his audience, when the lecture was over, having conferred with one or two persons who were not members of our Church, the speaker beckoned to me and asked me to announce that he would lecture again the following day at the same hour. It was the last straw that broke the camel's back. I went forward and stated to the audience that I had been requested to announce that the brother would address the people again the next day at the hour named, and I would so announce as requested, but I hoped this would be the last time we would ever be asked to announce anything in our church except religious services, and that no such request need be made during my pastorate here. It took a good deal of courage for me to do this, since there had already been an effort made to make it appear that I was not in sympathy with the prohibition movement, which was altogether false; and besides this, there had never been any effort made to protect our house of worship against everything that came along; hence I could not know how my action would be taken even by my own Church. But I had decided to do this if they ran me out of town. Two or three weak-kneed fellows did take a scare at this and imagined we would be ruined; but our leaders commended my course perfectly, and said this ought to have been done long before. We did not have the lecture the following afternoon, and, so far as I am informed,

our people have never been asked to open our church doors here for anything of the kind since, and our congregation has always prospered, this being now one of the best stations in the North Mississippi Conference. We would better emulate the example of our sainted Bishop Marvin, who would raise his hat when passing a country chapel, than convert our houses of worship into public halls, to be used for everything.

Let it be understood, however, that there would have been no objection offered to the address on prohibition by the last speaker mentioned, if our revival meeting had not been in session, as we consider the temperance cause as part of the Church's work. It was the disregard for our meeting that was most trying.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Sickness.

Everything was still progressing well with us at West Point. The Fourth Quarterly Conference was held three months before the session of the Annual Conference, which, as will be remembered, was to be held in this charge, and arrangements must be made for its entertainment. Some improvements must be made on our house of worship, or we felt so at least; hence we set about this work. Two hundred dollars was secured for this purpose, and the work was being done. About this time, however, death claimed our little Scottie, now ten months old, of whom mention has been made in a former chapter. We were in affliction; but

> "Hope looks beyond the bounds of time
> When what we now deplore
> Shall rise in full immortal prime
> And bloom to fade no more."

At the time of the death of this child I was hardly able to be up myself, and this heavy, depressed feeling continued to increase until I found myself in the grasp of typhoid fever, which held me for many days at what seemed to be death's door. My physicians had despaired of my recovery and had already informed me of my extremely critical condition. I thought I would probably soon be in heaven; in fact, I had reached the point when I really wanted to go. I was so tired, and

felt that heaven would be to me a place of rest. With this feeling I sent for the Treasurer of our Board of Stewards, B. F. McCrary, and placed all my business in his hands. After giving him time to look over matters, I asked him if everything would be straight; and being assured by him that it would and that there would be something left for my family in case I should die, I told him good-by and turned my face to the wall, feeling that I would be in heaven the next day. But just at this point the following verse of a song came to me and seemed to ring through my entire being:

"I would at once have quit the field,
Where foes with fury roam;
But ah! my passport was not sealed,
I could not yet go home."

I can never forget the impression this made upon my mind. I began to ask myself the question as to what this could mean, when the impression came to me that my work was not yet done, but that the afflictions then upon me, though they might be severe and would be protracted, would only serve to open a doorway into a more enlarged field of usefulness. But has this been fulfilled? We will let future events testify in answer to this question. My troubles lasted long. I was not able to do any more work in the ministry during the whole fall and winter. Soon after the above impressions came to me and I had assured my attendant physicians, Drs. Scott and Unger, that I would not die, the disease strangely affected my left leg, which swelled up almost equal to my body, and Dr. Unger was candid enough to tell me that this might involve my heart at any moment and kill me;

that if it were not for my courage he would say there were ninety-nine chances against me where there was one for me, and that even if I should recover they would probably have to perform an operation, which would make a cripple of me for life. To this I replied: "Doctor, you may have to make a cripple of me; the Lord may want a cripple to do his work; but I'll not die. The Lord has a use for me here yet." The doctor then said he was glad to hear me say that, as the mind had a good deal to do with things of this sort. But I was resting on what I believed then and believe yet to be God's promises. The doctor painted with iodine the parts where this trouble seemed to be located, and the swelling began to scatter and spread over the other parts of the body until I was swollen all over as one having dropsy. I couldn't wear any kind of shoes, except large slippers with vamps turned down, and was compelled to keep my lower limbs bandaged from my hips down, under instructions of the physicians, for five months or more. My best friends seemed yet to have but little hope of my final recovery, and thought I was simply under a delusion. Still they were very kind to me. When the Conference came I was only able to move around cautiously in these No. 10 slippers to help entertain it. After Conference, being left without a pastoral charge, I moved to Hernando, Miss., for residence. I had no relatives or friends or even acquaintances at Hernando, and the move was a long one in our Conference territory, from West Point to Hernando. I had been under an abiding impression during all this sickness, after I felt that I would get well, that I should go to Hernando to live. So by the time the ap-

pointed pastors had reached their respective charges I had gone to Hernando. My friends wondered why I had not gone to relatives to be cared for until I could recover. The truth was, I didn't have any relatives who were able to do this without taxing themselves, as I had my wife and three children to care for and no means of support, now that we were left without a charge. I fully believed, however, that God would give me plenty of work to do and a support for it when he was ready for me to enter the field; and then he had prepared some good people here at Hernando to give me all the help necessary, and that too without the asking on my part. Bishop Duncan, who had presided at our Conference, had given expression to a thought which had greatly strengthened me. He said: "When the Lord's soldiers who have often been in the thickest of the fight are left on the field wounded and bleeding, they are not left to die without attention. The Lord has a hospital for his wounded ones, where they can be taken and cared for until able to serve again or care for themselves." It seemed that the Lord had caused him to speak these words for my special benefit or comfort; and then I was reminded of how God had cared for his prophet at ancient Sarepta, causing a widow to sustain him there, and God does not change his ways. When we reached Hernando our goods had not arrived; but Sister Meriwether, one of God's "elect" ladies, took us into her home and entertained us until the goods could reach us; and when this was done and we went to our rented home, we found a table heaped up with groceries and everything needful for living. There was enough to last us at least a month, and before this supply was exhausted

more was brought. Thus things went on until I was again able to go out and work a little. There was another good woman here who seemed to have felt it her special mission to look after these things. This was Mrs. Mosby, another widow, and never did she cease this work until I was out holding meetings, and thus bringing in supplies from other sources. I had rented a small house at seven dollars a month without the means in sight to pay the rent, although this fact had never been mentioned to a living being. But before the time was up for paying this rent I was in Dr. T. C. Weir's home at Sardis, whither I had gone on a visit to my old friend. This was the first time I had been from home in nearly five months, and Dr. Weir said: "Brother Kilgore, I have a small amount of the Lord's money which has not been directed, and I will take the liberty to turn it over to you, feeling that he would have it thus applied." He handed me ten dollars. I was in this way prepared to meet my first month's rent. Before another month was out I had become able to conduct a series of prayer services at Batesville for Rev. J. E. Thomas, who put into my hands enough to pay the next month's rent, and in less than another month I was able to begin to work and get good returns for my labors.

When my mind reverts to these things I am filled with gratitude to God for his great mercies and to these good people for the part they were directed to take in this whole matter; and then I am made to wonder why we ever doubt God's providence, when he has thus so often shown himself so abundantly able and ever willing to supply our every need. Ofttimes since

he has helped me when the way seemed as dark as recorded above, of which I will write in future chapters. In the above instance of sickness the Lord had given me the following promise, which I held on to through all: "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

I have made a record of these things in detail that I may in this way give glory to God, who has, in his own way and at his own chosen time, so wondrously cared for me and mine—and that, too, when no other help seemed nigh. But we remember that he has said: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." We have found him faithful to his word.

CHAPTER XL.

At Work Again.

While it was yet difficult for me to walk, owing to my defective leg where the fever seemed to have settled, I began to work in meetings. My first work was in the home Church at Hernando, where with the pastor, Rev. John W. Bell, I continued two weeks, and witnessed a good work. I appreciated the privilege of doing what I could for the dear, good people who had been so kind to me. Rev. K. A. Jones was with us and preached several strong sermons in this meeting, and we enjoyed his society in our home very much. We were also honored here with a visit to our home by that stalwart Christian and statesman, Judge A. T. Roane, of Grenada, who gave as much of his influence as he could to our work. Rev. H. T. Gaines was also in the meeting, and rendered us valuable service. Brother Gaines is a noble fellow, and I must here acknowledge my heartfelt gratitude to him for his great kindness to me during my long-continued illness. I found in him a friend indeed. And as to dear Brother Bell, our pastor, I can never find language to express my gratitude to him for the faithful way in which he ministered to me and my loved ones while in his charge. He is truly one of God's noblemen. I have been associated with him often since, and found him ever the same. Revs. G. W. Bachman and S. M. Thames were also among our special friends in the

ministry during these seasons of sorrow, and their names have ever been as household words in our home. The Lord will reward them for words of sympathy and deeds of love. If time and space would allow, I could write of many others who helped us on the way. When the meeting was over at Hernando, we went to Cold Water, Brother Bell's other appointment, for a similar work, and the Lord gave us a measure of success. A goodly number were added to the Church, mostly among the young people. From here I went to Carrollton in response to an invitation from Rev. T. W. Lewis. This was my second visit to Carrollton in the Lord's work; and although the Lord had given us a great victory before, it remained for us to witness even a greater work now. I found Brother Lewis a very pleasant companion in the work, and when I noted his painstaking and systematic way of doing everything, I predicted for him a bright future, and in this I have not been disappointed. Here we also heard six strong sermons by Rev. R. A. Burrows, who was quite young in the ministry then, but has since served as one of the most efficient presiding elders in his Conference. He is now in West Texas. The names of many might be mentioned here who were helpful in the work at Carrollton in scoring these great victories for the Lord; but I note with especial pleasure the Bingham family, who have always stood like a stone wall for Christ and his cause in this town and section of country. Their many good deeds will doubtless come up as a memorial before the Lord in their favor at the revelation of all things.

The meeting over here, I went home to my loved

family for a few days, and then was off for Coffeeville to assist Rev. T. G. Freeman in a meeting. This was my first association with Brother Freeman, but I found him an easy man to work with, which cannot be said of every one who invites an assisting minister into his charge. While Brother Freeman keeps an eye on the work at every turn, still he makes a man feel free in his charge and is ready to rejoice in every good work. Seventy-three conversions were reported in this meeting. Written requests for prayer were handed in during the meeting until seventy-eight persons had been thus represented; and when the work was ended only four of those were left out. Later on I had the privilege of witnessing the conversion of two of these, and I hope in answer to the many prayers offered the remaining two have been saved ere this. One case here is noteworthy. Early in the history of this meeting I felt specially drawn to a broad-faced, open-countenanced gentleman in the congregation who seemed to be very attentive to the word. On inquiry I learned this gentleman's name and that he was at the time clerk of the circuit court, and respected by all who knew him, but not a Christian. My interest in the man continued to grow on me, although a stranger, until I was invited into his home. His wife was a Christian and a Methodist; hence their home was open to me at any time. While in his home I told him of the interest I had felt in him, and afterwards took my Bible and went to the courthouse and engaged in protracted conversations with him and read to him some of God's promises to penitents, as he had by this time expressed an interest in his own soul by coming forward for prayer.

The meeting went on until, as above indicated, many had been saved, but still my friend was left out. The closing service came, and with a feeling I can never describe I went to him in the congregation and pleaded with him as a friend would plead with a friend to surrender all to Christ then and there and come forward and go with us. He seemed to hesitate for a time, but finally shook his head and said he could not go. I turned from him and went back down the aisle weeping like a child, and the people wept. Why should I have felt so much interest in him, a stranger? I returned home, and then went to other places; made one visit to Texas, where the Lord was with us. I was gone three months or more. Then I had an engagement in East Mississippi, where my family would accompany me. We were on the way; our route was planned via Grenada and Durant to West Point, but we had purchased tickets only to Grenada. I don't remember why. I had been in a spirit of prayer all day. There seemed to be a burden on me I couldn't understand, but this was probably made plainer later on. Before we had reached Grenada I said to my wife: "Let's go up to Coffeeville and spend the Sabbath with friends." She agreed; and instead of making close connection at Grenada for the south, we remained there several hours and went north to Coffeeville, reaching there at eleven o'clock at night. It was Saturday night. When I stepped off on the platform, a little Hebrew friend of mine put his hand on my shoulder, saying, "Is this Mr. Kilgore?" and added that they had just sent a telegram for me. My brothers lived a few miles out from this place, and I thought possibly the

message was from them; but was soon informed that my friend, Mr. John Holly, had been shot down accidentally in an attempt to arrest a desperado. The criminal was aiming his shot at another officer, but hit Holly. Holly was the circuit court clerk in whom I had felt and manifested so much interest during the meeting held there. It was thought that he would soon die; and, as he had expressed a desire to see me, the telegram had been sent, as mentioned above. How did I come to be on the platform at Coffeeville just when needed? My home was nearly a hundred miles from there, and I would have been a hundred miles in another direction next morning had my course not been changed. I have always believed the hand of the Lord was in this in answer to the prayers that had been offered in this man's behalf. I took my family to the hotel, and was soon at his bedside, where prayer was offered a number of times for his recovery, if it were God's will, but more particularly for his salvation. He finally expressed some hope, and I spoke to Mrs. John Collins, a devout Christian of that place, asking her to join me in secret prayer that Mr. Holly might be spared at least long enough to leave satisfactory evidence to his family and friends that he was saved, and I reminded Sister Collins of the Lord's promise that where two were agreed in asking anything in his name it would be granted. While Mr. Holly seemed almost dead at this time, still he did revive and made a bright profession of religion, expressed regret that he had not joined the Church during the meeting when he was in good health, and declared that if he lived to be able to attend services again he would unite with the Church. Although he did live to be able to walk

about in his own home again and talk beautifully of his hope of heaven, one day before he had gained strength enough to get out he was suddenly taken to his final home. But our prayers had been answered, and we are comforted in the hope of meeting him again.

Another incident of a very different character occurred in connection with the Coffeeville meeting. We were engaged in a social meeting in the church one morning, a meeting of prayer and praise and testimony, when three young ladies were seated together on the second seat from the front. They were all active workers, but were members of different Churches—Baptist, Presbyterian, and Methodist. It was already known that the Baptist girl would respond to any call to work for Christ anywhere or in any way, but the other two, while active in their respective Churches, had never been called on in public for testimony or prayer. But this time I stated that we were going to engage in prayer and we would have three prayers offered before resuming our seats, led by these three young ladies, calling their names and placing the Baptist girl in the lead. They all responded favorably and made very good prayers, but after the congregation had been dismissed the Presbyterian girl stepped forward and said to me that she didn't know what her pastor would have to say about this. I thought then that I knew Dr. Thomas, her pastor, better than she did. She hadn't gotten out of the house when he met her in the aisle and said: "Clara, you are worth ten times as much to-day as you have ever been before." As I started away from the church on my way to my boarding place, the Methodist young lady said to me: "May I

walk with you a piece?" I replied: "Certainly." We had gone but a few steps before she said that she didn't know how a certain young friend of hers would take this, referring to a young lawyer, who had occupied a seat in the back of the church that day and witnessed all that had been done. This young lawyer was a Methodist himself, however; and while he had probably not been living as he ought all the way, he was revived in this meeting and was one of the number at the depot when I started to leave to personally express his appreciation of the work done and to extend to me a hearty invitation to visit their town again when I could make it convenient. Soon after this he and the young lady referred to were made one, and so we see there is never danger in the line of duty.

From Coffeeville, after a few days spent at home again, I went to Clarksdale to assist Rev. A. P. Sage. I found Brother Sage as pleasant a man as I had ever met in the work, and would have probably scored another victory for Christ here, but new physical troubles developed on me, which threatened my future usefulness for a time, and Brother Sage advised me to visit Eureka Springs, Ark., for my health. I did not do this, but went to Texas to spend a while.

CHAPTER XLI.

First Visit to the West.

Soon after our removal to Hernando, Miss., we had a visit from Mr. John Mackie, a young man from Jonesboro, Ark., who brought me a paper containing a list of the appointments of the White River Conference; and after spending a little time with us he gave me a cordial invitation to visit his town at some future time. I assured him I would be very glad to do so, as I had never up to this time crossed the Mississippi River. After this, time had passed and succeeding events had come and gone, until Brother Sage recommended that I make a visit to Eureka Springs for my health, but instead I had planned a trip to Texas to spend a little time with relatives there. When I started I could purchase a ticket only as far as Memphis, intending to secure a ticket there over the Little Rock and Memphis Railroad; but when I reached the city the ticket agent, who seemed very kind, insisted that he could sell me a ticket over the Kansas City, Memphis, and Birmingham Railroad to Jonesboro, Ark., and thence over the Cotton Belt to my destination in Texas. He offered to attend to some private matters in the city for me in order that I might get off on the train then ready to pull out over the route suggested, and told me the agent at Hernando had wired him of my coming and asked him to extend any favors he could to me and

he would appreciate the act as a personal favor. I knew nothing of all this until he told me, but appreciated this consideration, nevertheless, and purchased the ticket over the route indicated. When I boarded the train and stepped into the dressing apartment to change my coat for a lighter one, as it was quite warm, a gentleman reclining on a sort of lounge in there asked me if I was not a minister. I told him I was. He then asked: "What kind?" I answered: "A Methodist." He inquired further as to where I was going. I replied: "To Texas." He said: "You'll change at Hoxie then." I told him: "No, at Jonesboro." He then stated that he was a Methodist preacher, presiding elder of the Jonesboro District, and that he lived at Jonesboro; that I would have three or four hours there and must dine with him. This I declined, stating to him that I was in bad health and it would probably be better for me to stop at the hotel. To this he replied that they did not allow preachers to go to hotels in Jonesboro when they knew of their presence, and insisted that I should go with him, which I finally consented to do, and was treated very kindly indeed. Now I have related all these things to show farther on how a chain of circumstances can lead up to other things of greater import. There were wonderful events to be developed in the future as the result of this chapter of apparent accidents. When we had reached the home of this presiding elder (it was Rev. S. L. Cochran), he sent his little boy out after our pastor at Jonesboro, Rev. M. M. Smith, who came and spent awhile with us; and as there was a meeting in progress there in our church, he invited me to remain and assist them in the work.

But as I had bought a through ticket to Texas, I could not accept his invitation, although I would have been glad to do so. It was not the Lord's time. They were looking for Rev. H. M. Grenade to come to their assistance, but were in doubt as to his coming. So on the way to the train, as I was leaving, Brother Smith asked me if I could not come at some future time and conduct a meeting for them in case Brother Grenade should fail to reach them at that time, to which I replied that I would be very glad to do so, if after praying over the matter he thought I would be the man to do this. I was a little surprised at all this consideration and extended courtesy, as I was altogether a stranger to these brethren, but this was "God's way." I went on to Texas and spent six weeks with friends and relatives, holding two very successful meetings while there. One was at my sister's Church. I had not seen her in eighteen years—indeed, since I was a little boy. The other meeting was at Grapevine, with my old friend and spiritual father, Rev. Ben H. Bounds. This last was truly a great meeting, as men and women, boys and girls of every age and station were among the converts; and added to this was the great pleasure of being again associated with my dear friend of other days and his noble family. I also witnessed in this home an incident which served as an illustration of the way in which love sweetens labor. We had been in the meeting three weeks, and every one seemed worn out completely when the service was over; the people would return to their homes and drop down almost anywhere and any way. We would have to close the meeting. About this time there came into the home in which

I was stopping a note announcing the coming of certain friends from a distance. There were some young ladies in the home, and this had a meaning in it for them. This note seemed to put new life into them, and they moved around as though they were on springs. As a result, I shared one of the best dinners next day I had seen anywhere—prepared, too, by the hands of those girls—and I could not but be reminded as to how the Church would flourish if people regarded Christ with the same feeling of affection manifested on the part of those young ladies for their special friends.

The meeting closed at Grapevine, and I set off at once for my return trip to Mississippi. As I was not sure whether it would ever be my privilege to visit the West again, I made the return trip by way of St. Louis, thus passing through the Indian Territory, the corner of Kansas, the State of Missouri, and then down on the east side of the Mississippi River through the southern corner of Illinois, Kentucky, and West Tennessee to Memphis. I was already impressed with the greatness of the West after this trip, and yet I had only touched the West proper in all this round, as I learned later. I didn't know when I was making this extended trip that it would finally be my lot to work in all this territory and far beyond, but God had so ordered it.

Having reached home safely and spent a week or ten days with the loved ones, I filled an engagement with Rev. J. E. Thomas at Wesley Chapel, near Batesville, where we had a very gracious revival. Among others who joined the Church I recall the name of Wiley Whitten, who was said to have been

a seeker from time to time for several years, but who reached a final decision in this meeting, and who has since served in prominent places in the Church. I think the coming in of his ten-year-old daughter had much to do with bringing him to a final decision. After this meeting was over, accompanied by my family, I went to Atlanta, Miss., and assisted Rev. W. C. Lester in meetings at Atlanta and Slate Springs; and at both places God gave us gracious outpourings of his Holy Spirit. One incident at Slate Springs deserves special mention. It was on Monday morning. Penitents were called and two came. They were Professor Connor (one of my former preceptors) and Mr. Boland, my lifelong friend. When we called the congregation to prayer, I did a thing I have never done on any other occasion before or since. I stated that the penitents would lead in prayer, Professor Connor praying first and Mr. Boland following; and so they did, but before the prayer was over they had both been happily converted. Mr. Boland gave his name for membership in our Church that day, while Professor Connor afterwards united with the Baptist Church with his wife. I had been invited to Mr. Boland's home for dinner that day, but didn't know that he would already be saved; thought I could probably have some influence in this direction by going. I reached his house a little in advance of him and was on the veranda when he rode up, threw his bridle over the gatepost, came in, and reported to his family what had taken place. We then had a good meeting at home. When dinner was over several persons came in, and still others came. I didn't understand what had brought them, but a little later

Brother Boland invited us into their parlor, where everything had been arranged for a special service. He took his stand in the midst and stated that he had that day given his own heart to God, that he had committed his loved ones to him for safe-keeping, and now he wanted his new home dedicated to God. He said that from then on all he had was at God's command, to be used as he might choose. I was not astonished three years later, when I made a second visit to that community, to find great improvements made on their house of worship, for I knew this Church had in it the type of consecration indicated above. There were others here of similar spirit. Among those was our dear Brother Cardwell, who has so recently been called home. Then came the Zinns, the Gastens, the Palmers, and others. At the Atlanta meeting I also witnessed a good ingathering. Among these was my own son—the eldest—who was then only eight years old, but who stood side by side with Dr. Abernathy to take the Church vows. Dr. Abernathy was a tall, handsome gentleman and quite intellectual, while my boy was yet only an innocent child. Brother Lester rejoiced greatly in these victories in his charge. It might properly be said of Brother Lester as of one of old: "He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and much people were added to the Church."

CHAPTER XLII.

Jonesboro Revival.

After returning from Texas and engaging in three or four meetings in my own State (Mississippi), I ran up to our home at Hernando to see how things were going there, and found two letters in our home office for me. They were from Brother Smith, the pastor at Jonesboro, Ark., inviting me to conduct a meeting for him at a given time. Brother Smith had never known me until our incidental meeting at the home of Rev. S. L. Cochran, in his town, a few weeks before; but he told me afterwards that he had written Bishop Galloway after meeting me as to whether it would be safe to have me conduct a meeting in his charge. In the absence of the Bishop, Sister Galloway had answered his letter favorably, and hence he had written me the invitation. The time suited, and I began to arrange my plans to go, and so wrote him. In the interim, however, I was in a meeting with Rev. J. S. Oakley at Water Valley, where the Lord gave us a good work, although we had to work against outside attractions which we could not control. Brother Oakley expressed himself, however, as highly pleased with the work accomplished. By this time the date was up for my going to Jonesboro, and I had asked the Lord very earnestly to give us a great victory at Jonesboro, if it was his will for me to continue in this line of work. Up to this time I had tried to follow

his leadings perfectly, and wanted still to do so, and therefore made this a sort of test meeting, as the Annual Conference was near at hand, when some decided action would have to be taken in my case. I reached Jonesboro on Wednesday morning in time to occupy the pulpit at the morning hour. The meeting had been in progress since the preceding Sunday. In the very first service the Lord poured out his Spirit on the people in great power, and shouts of praise went up to God from a number of glad hearts. It was an unusual demonstration, and this too without any special effort on our part to create such a stir. It was the power of the Lord. These evidences of the divine presence and power continued in every succeeding service, which brought the people in great throngs; and the whole town and county round about was brought under the influence of the work. Many of the leaders in business and social circles were brought in, and the work swept on with constantly increasing interest to yet greater victory until one hundred and sixty-five had made public profession of faith in Christ, and eighty-six of this number had been added to our Methodist Church, while nearly all the remaining ones had united with other denominations.

Some incidents connected with this meeting may be interesting to the reader. On Saturday, at the close of the first week of the meeting, we had enjoyed a great blessing from the Lord, and I felt inspired to announce that we would have a great service again that night, and insisted on the people coming. But while we were at the supper table, when the sun was yet fully a half hour high, we were astonished by the sound of very heavy thunder near by. Indeed, it

seemed to be almost over the house! I arose from the table and walked out on the veranda and found that there was a well-formed cloud, very threatening, which seemed to be coming up rapidly. The question came to me: "Now where is your great service?" I went into my room, dropped on my knees, and asked God to let the cloud be rifted so that it might pass us until we could fight that battle for the Lord. This was my exact language, as I could afterwards recall it. Having made this prayer, I arose and brushed my clothes and hair and made other preparation for the approaching service, feeling assured that my prayer would be answered. When I walked out again, I found that the thing I had prayed for had been accomplished perfectly. But I did not yet know the full import of the prayer. We went to the place of worship at an early hour, and found quite a good representation of people already there. I beckoned to Brother Johnson, a local preacher, and one too in whom everybody had the utmost confidence, who came across the altar to me. I told him I was going to call for a moment or two of secret prayer at the beginning of the service, but at the end of the service, after the sermon, I was going to ask the Christian people who had friends in the congregation for whom they were praying to go to them and kneel near them in prayer, as an evidence of their interest, and wanted him to lead the prayer. Just at this time some brother announced one song and by mistake started another, thus creating confusion. To overcome this I called to prayer at once, and called for the season of silent prayer as mentioned to Brother Johnson; but he had seemed to misunderstand the whole arrange-

ment, and began to pray aloud at once, with a great deal of earnestness. Thus we had no silent prayer, and I felt that the people who had seen me call Johnson to me would think this whole thing was planned for effect. I became embarrassed and confused myself, and to avoid any further entanglement arose and announced my text at once. There were present that night several ministers who had not been with us before, and I suppose I naturally wanted to have a good service on this account. Probably a sort of man-pleasing spirit had taken possession of me to a certain extent. I soon wore off this embarrassment to some extent and moved on with a degree of liberty until just as I was closing, ready to make a proposition, having decided not to ask the Christians to go in the congregation. But before I called for the song this same Brother Johnson, quite tall in stature, arose from the front seat and walked down the aisle, thus attracting the attention of the people just at the time I wanted their attention more than at any other time, and detracting from the interest of the service. I felt sure he would stop where I had instructed him, as I wanted him to lead the prayer, but I didn't think of his going until after the call had been made for the Christians to act. So I called the people to their feet at once, so that I might hide Brother Johnson from the gaze of the multitude, and then made my proposition, but did not call on Brother Johnson to pray. As already stated, he was one of the very best of men, but had simply misunderstood orders or plans, and we were in a tangle. I never had such a fisticuff fight with the old enemy in my life. He seemed to be contending for every inch of the ground, but

was in reality in the last throes of death, so far as that meeting was concerned, as we scored a great victory that night, witnessing a number of very happy conversions. After that the work moved on without an additional obstruction until the results were accomplished as recorded above.

Another incident was that of a skeptical young wife, who opposed her Christian husband at every turn in his efforts to do good; but he pressed his way on through all this, rendering himself very efficient in the work. One night he went home after a protracted service, in which the power of God had been manifest, and found his wife reading the Bible, but when he walked in she threw it aside and jumped in the bed; but it was soon evident that she was under conviction, and it wasn't long before she was herself powerfully saved. Her sister, who had left Vandale to get away from a revival meeting which was in session there, ran into our meeting just at this time and was also converted. She came forward to be introduced to me, and stated that she had jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. Many other things might be recorded, but we must desist. This great meeting closed, but the work goes on. A young men's prayer meeting was organized, and was continued for four consecutive years without a break, developing a large number of workers, who have already left their impress on the world for good, and some of whom have gone to their reward in heaven. But as I will have occasion hereafter to write more of Jonesboro and her people, I close this chapter by saying that the people here made me a nice purse, which enabled me to meet some obligations and prepare for the ap-

proaching session of our Conference, which was to be held this year at Winona.

On my return from Arkansas I stopped at Memphis, attended the reception of President Cleveland and wife at the Gayoso Hotel, and had the privilege, with many others, of shaking hands with them. It was estimated that at least fifty thousand people crowded the streets of Memphis on this occasion. From here I ran down home. But before going to the session of our own Conference, in response to an invitation, I ran back into Arkansas and attended the session of the Arkansas Annual Conference at Fayetteville, where Bishop Galloway presided. My plan was to work more in Arkansas during the following year, if the Lord should so order, as there were already other open doors. On the way to Fayetteville I spent the Sabbath at Van Buren, where Rev. J. B. Culpeper was conducting a great meeting. I was informed afterwards that more than two hundred were added to the Church here. I preached for the brethren in this meeting on Sunday at eleven o'clock, as Brother Culpeper was pretty well worn out and did not wish to preach at this hour. I also preached at the Fayetteville Annual Conference, where I spent two or three days, witnessing the Conference work and hearing sermons from Rev. J. W. Hill and Dr. I. S. Hopkins, of Georgia. My return trip from this Conference, as far as Memphis, was in company with the scholarly minister last named. I found in him a very genial companion indeed. Soon I was at Winona, where the North Mississippi Conference was in session, and from which I expected to take a new start; but of this Conference and its results I will write later.

CHAPTER XLIII.

At Black Hawk.

I had sustained a supernumerary relation to the Conference during the past year and while I had been able to work only part of the time, I had, under God, witnessed between five and six hundred conversions and more than three hundred additions to the Methodist Church, and my mind was fully made up to ask the same relation at the hands of the Conference for another year. I had expressed my intention of asking for this relation to Dr. Cameron, my presiding elder at West Point, before I was ever taken sick, stating to him that I had felt especially called to work in revivals; and now that I had had one year's experience, and God had so abundantly set his seal to the work I felt convinced that I should cavil with the question no longer, and yet I did not wish to sever my connection with the Conference. It was soon very evident, however, at the session at Winona, that I could no longer sustain this relation and keep at work. They said that they needed more men in the regular pastorate, and hence they could not give me the relation longer. Of course this was only private talk, but I saw the drift was in this direction; hence I did not ask for the relation. Here I probably made a great mistake; but we are liable to do this while in the flesh, as we will never be perfect in judgment here. If this decision was wrong and hurtful, it must be classed

with the sins of infirmity. I was appointed from this Conference to the Black Hawk Circuit, and was soon at my post. The sainted J. F. Evans was my predecessor here; and as it was not convenient for him to move right away, we were taken for a time into the home of that loyal and big-hearted Methodist, J. B. Streeter, who, with his noble wife, entertained us right royally until we could move to the parsonage. The weather was bad, and I could do but little work for a time; yet to my astonishment and comfort the stewards reported three hundred and forty-nine dollars on the preacher's salary at the first quarterly meeting—and this, too, within a little more than a month after Conference. This was not the result specially of any impression I had made on the work, but simply the fidelity of a faithful set of stewards who always looked well to the support of their preachers. If there could have been any temptation to hold on to the regular pastoral work from a monetary consideration, I certainly had it here. But all this failed to make any such impression. On the other hand, I felt all the year, although they were kind to us all through, that I was working in harness that did not fit me, and resolved and announced publicly before the year was half gone that I would not be their pastor another year; that I fully intended to take some relation to the Church which would allow me to engage in the line of work I loved, and to which I felt specially called. We enjoyed a degree of success, however, on the circuit, as the Lord gave us his presence in all the services and a goodly number were added to the Church during the year. C. W. Perkins and R. A. Meek, whose homes were in the bounds of this charge

and who had both been impressed that they should preach the gospel, but who had been postponing the matter, received a new inspiration for the work during this year and enlisted at once, and have both since become very efficient ministers of the New Testament. As in all other years, there were trials to face this year; but in the main the people were so considerate that we were strengthened for these other things. Most of our associations were very pleasant, and we formed some friendships here which have left a sweet flavor in our lives we can never dismiss. Here too the Lord gave us our third baby boy, who is now eighteen years of age, and we named him Bingham, for the Bingham family of Carrollton. His second name is Hicks, for that noble layman, J. W. Hicks, of West Point. He is a very promising boy and adds greatly to the comfort of our ripening years. During this year my presiding elder, Rev. R. P. Mitchell, than whom the Lord never made a grander man, expressed a doubt to some friends as to my going into regular revival work, but after I told him of my convictions he assured me that I should not confer with flesh and blood, but should go at once into the work. He said that if he had my convictions and had received them in the way I had he certainly would hesitate no longer; that he would heed the voice of God rather than men. He said, furthermore, that he would ask a supernumerary relation for me at Conference, and get it if I so desired, and this he did. The Conference was at Starkville. I was given this relation again, and went at once into the field. I will give the results of this year's work in another chapter.

While on the Black Hawk work I assisted the

brethren in meetings at Grenada, Lexington, Abbeville, and Tchula—all good meetings. This was especially true of the meeting at Tchula. The little town was mightily stirred, so that Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics were brought under the influence of the good work. I remember one Catholic lady who made a bright profession of religion, and when the meeting closed she presented to me and to the preacher in charge three dollars each. Rev. Joe Howell was in charge of this Church. Brother Howell was a noble fellow, and has since gone to his reward. In the meeting at Abbeville, where Rev. R. M. Davis had charge, I was invited into a home to dine one day, and while seated in the parlor awaiting dinner, in company with two young ladies, one of them seemed free to talk about religion; said she wanted to be a Christian, but the dance was in her way. I talked with her a little while as to the evils of the dance, and, seeing that she was quite deeply impressed, called them to prayer with me. During the prayer she was happily converted, and in two weeks after the meeting closed her redeemed soul was called home to God. How fortunate that she yielded herself to the "tender embrace" of Christ and was thus prepared for this change! I had already witnessed several other instances of this kind under my own ministry, and I have often thought that I would rather thus be instrumental in the salvation of souls than to wear the crowns of the nations. Two other incidents of this year might be briefly stated here with profit. Our District Conference was held at Greenwood. Rev. T. A. S. Adams, D.D., who was Chairman of the Examining Committee when I was admitted on trial into the Conference, and whom I

had learned to love, preached a sermon that helped me very much indeed, and I felt, when he concluded, that I wanted to go forward and give him my hand and tell him so; but as there was no proposition made, I failed to do so. I felt afterwards that I had quenched the Spirit, and made a vow that if I ever felt thus again under any one's preaching I would act differently. Later Dr. Adams sank in his tracks at a ticket window and died instantly, but I had failed to encourage him when I had an opportunity. At Conference, at the close of the same year, a similar feeling came to me when Rev. George Inge was closing his sermon, and with my vow on me I went forward and gave him my hand when there was no proposition, not regarding criticism, and others quickly followed and still others. Brother Inge got happy and rejoiced greatly, and others rejoiced, so that it was truly a happy ending. In a few months I picked up a paper and noticed that Brother Inge had also gone to the good world, and I was glad that I had gone forward and shaken hands with him. We will rarely ever make a mistake when we follow up such impressions as the above, and people never get so high in the scale of success in life or fame as not to sometimes need encouragement. But I must leave any other thought for future chapters.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Trip to California.

During the closing weeks of my year at Black Hawk I had purchased a home at Coffeeville, Miss., in which I got a bargain on easy terms. Soon after Conference we moved into this home and were happy. As I had made an engagement to hold a meeting at Paragould, Ark., during the past year and failed to be able to fill the engagement, owing to sickness in my home, I thought this a proper time to go and offer my services in the beginning of the new year, and was soon *en route* to Paragould, without any arrangement for a meeting there at this time. But in this there was no mistake. I found Brother Ritter, the pastor, ready for such a work, and we began at once. There had been a whisky fight at Paragould the day I reached there. The town had gone "wet," and the whisky men had celebrated their victory by giving a public treat; hence many were intoxicated, and it did not look like a very favorable time to embark in a meeting, viewing it from one standpoint; but the results of the meeting proved to the contrary, as we witnessed at least seventy-five happy conversions, with a half hundred additions to our own Church. It was winter time, and the weather was bad; but notwithstanding the town was new and without sidewalks, still the people came in throngs, through rain, snow, and mud, and filled the large house of worship. The

church was crowded at every meeting. A little incident here led to the conversion and bringing into the Church of a prominent family, which in turn led to the above large results. I was in the home of Judge Mack, who was already prominent in the Church; but his daughter, Miss Jennie, who was a most attractive young lady and withal quite worldly, as I was informed, was yet out of the fold, and I set about trying by personal effort to get her saved, and was soon comforted in seeing her make a bright profession of religion in her own parlor at home. She at once united with the Church, and went to work to save others, and very soon her married brother and his whole family—all old enough—had been brought in, and then the others, as already recorded. So much for a little personal work. I wish I could record many other striking incidents of this great meeting, but these must be left out. Of course none of these victories were won without a conflict with the old enemy. He will never allow God's people to come in and occupy any territory he has claimed without such a conflict, but will contend for every inch of the ground, and if the Church is not constantly wide-awake he will often defeat us. So I have found it.

During the meeting here I received a long letter from a presiding elder in California, inviting me to the Pacific Coast and into his district to hold some meetings. This seemed a long way off, but I had already had some sort of a premonition that I would be invited to California this year. I do not know why I should have had such an impression, as I had never sought such a call. After considering the matter prayerfully, I accepted the invitation and was soon off for the long

journey. I secured a six months' round-trip ticket over a sort of belt route. My route going was via St. Louis, Kansas City, Pueblo, Denver, Salt Lake City, Sacramento, and San Francisco, making short stops at all the above-named places. Of course I saw much that was new and strange to me, as this route took me through some of the most sublime and picturesque scenery of the Rocky Mountains. I could write much of this trip and the attractions along the way; but travel has become so common now, and so many are using their pens in giving descriptions of all these things, that I think it hardly necessary to add anything here on this line. I found Rev. Sam Jones and his singer, E. O. Excell, in a great meeting at Sacramento, Cal., and spent three days with them. Rev. A. C. Bain was our pastor there at the time; and as Brother Jones did not hold services at his tabernacle at eleven o'clock on Sunday, I was invited to preach for Brother Bain, which I did, and was cordially entertained for the day in his pleasant home. Leaving Sacramento, I went down the Sacramento River on the steamer to San Francisco. The scenery along this river is grand. As our boat struck a sand bar and was thereby greatly detained, I was several hours late in reaching the last-named city, so remained on the vessel until morning. When the new day had come, having refreshed myself with the morning meal, I was soon off for the Cliff House on the beach, a distance of five or six miles by the cable car, to look for the first time on the mighty Pacific Ocean. I shall never forget my impressions as I stood alone and looked out over the "dark blue sea" and saw the mighty waves come rolling in. I strolled up and down

on the beach with feelings of awe, as I was made to consider God's wonderful works. I had already experienced feelings of this kind as our train had brought us sweeping along through the Rockies, where we passed through canyons that nature seemed to have cut and left open for the commerce of the world.

A day or two in San Francisco and Oakland, and I was off again through the Santa Clara Valley and over the Sierra Nevada Mountains to Los Angeles and other points in Southern California. When I had finally reached the home of Rev. D. C. Brown, the presiding elder, who had invited me thither, I found that he was not ready for his meetings, although he had urged me in his letter to come at once. I do not think he intended to mislead at all, but simply thought it would be necessary to be urgent to get me prepared to make so long a trip. He was very kind, however, and opened a meeting for me in his home town, Carpinteria, with Rev. A. T. Dunlap, pastor. I became very much drawn to Brother Dunlap and his faithful little wife. They were South Carolinians. I have met Brother Dunlap in South Carolina since, and he extended kind favors to me there that I appreciated very much. Brother Brown was also kind to me while at Carpinteria, and my impression while there was that he had a wife who was fully worthy of the position she occupied as a minister's wife. The only visible result of our work at Carpinteria was that of five little girls being added to the Church. The prospects were very good at the last, but Mr. Moody was expected at Santa Barbara just at that time and attracted a good deal of attention. We suspended in favor of his coming.

I made a visit to Santa Barbara, where I spent one day. The route from Carpinteria to Santa Barbara was all the way on the beach and was quite interesting. From here I went to Santa Ana, a distance of one hundred and eighty miles, to hold a meeting for Rev. Q. A. Oats. We continued three weeks at Santa Ana and witnessed a great work. A large number were added to the Church. Some things in connection with this meeting were worthy of note. In an after service Brother Oats was moving among the people who had remained with us, talking to them about their souls, when he came to a young man who posed as an infidel. Brother Oats told him he was quite a youth to be taking such a stand as that, and reminded him that the leaders of his school of thought had generally been men of corrupt lives who had switched off on this line to hide their sins. The young man said he took this as a personal insult. Brother Oats assured him that he did not mean to be personal, but that what he had stated was nevertheless true. The young man again said he took it as an insult and didn't propose to take an insult, upon which Brother Oats again told him that he did not mean to be personal, but that if nothing else would do him but to take this as a personal insult he could do so, and in addition to this could take one of the worst whippings that one ever carried away from a place of worship; that he would wear the floor out with him. The young man began to wither under this and started to apologize, when the pastor told him that no apology was necessary, that he was his friend and would go this length for him to save him, but that he couldn't run over his meeting, and that he ex-

pected to protect his Church. The young man apologized further, became penitent himself, and was received into the Methodist Church with a class of others on the following Sunday morning. Brother Oats seemed quite sorry that he had felt compelled to do what he did that night, however, and when the time came for receiving members into the Church at the close of this same service, he told Dr. Parker, the presiding elder, to baptize the candidates for him, that he himself had fallen from grace (referring to his altercation with the young man). It all turned to good account, however, as the young man might never have been reached otherwise.

Another incident was somewhat provoking. Our organist and chorister, a young man, had been charged with prevarication, involving some money matters. His accusers, who were members of another denomination, waited until he was at the front in a good service to come and arrest him, ostensibly to damage our meeting as much as possible. Still we went on, and the Lord gave us a great victory, as already indicated. In the main my stay at Santa Ana, which, by the way, is one of the loveliest towns for attractiveness on the Pacific Slope, was quite pleasant.

I returned to Los Angeles, where a few days were spent with old Mississippi friends, and then I was soon on my return trip homeward, which was over the Southern Pacific Railroad, through Arizona and New Mexico via El Paso, Tex.

Southern California is truly a lovely land, but it seems all the time a contradiction, as one is ever in full view of the eternal snow, and yet the flowers of every hue are blooming at his feet and the fruit ripen-

ing in reach on every hand. The climate is almost perfect, with some of the finest scenery in the world.

In starting home I had a day off at Colton and San Bernardino, and was quite impressed with their beauty. At Yuma, Ariz., I saw large numbers of "Blanket Indians," and was not very anxious to see them a second time in their uncivilized state. I will not attempt to describe them. I took breakfast here, and had time to make some purchases from them, thus securing some souvenirs of the trip to bring to the children. There is but little to interest one on this trip from Yuma to El Paso, Tex. At El Paso, or rather across the Rio Grande River from El Paso, in old Mexico, I had some hard luck, falling into the hands of some highway robbers, who dispossessed me of what money I had on my person, or at least most of it. I had gone over into the old city on the Mexican side and met with this experience. I will not stop to give details, but would simply suggest that a tourist always keep his eyes open. These parties held me up and demanded my cash, when I least suspected it, and left me almost entirely strapped.

My next stop was at Terrell, Tex., where three or four days were spent very pleasantly with Rev. O. P. Thomas and his people, and I preached five sermons while arrangements were being made for a meeting at Wills Point, Tex., where I joined Rev. W. W. Graham in a gracious revival, more than fifty being added to his membership. My associations here were of the most pleasant character, and this meeting opened the way for a still greater victory at Kaufman. This success, however, was not without great effort on the part of the Church. It looked for a time as though our

efforts would be fruitless at the last-named place, but such was not the case, as when the victory did come it only seemed the greater. Scores were added to the Church, and many of these were of the leaders in society and business circles.

My next meeting was with Rev. S. L. Cochran at Clarendon, Ark., where the Lord gave us more than a hundred souls for our hire. All the Churches of the town took an active part in the work and shared richly in the results. This record would not be complete if I did not go back and relate some things yet connected with these meetings. At Kaufman I was walking from the morning service at the church to my boarding house, when I passed a man doing some repair work on the sidewalk. I remarked: "You are fixing the walk." He replied: "Yes. I thought I would put it in condition so that it will not be dangerous to travel at night." I told him that was good, that the people could have a safer time getting to church, and asked him if he had attended any of our meetings. He replied frankly that he did not go to places of that kind. I told him calmly that we were in an excellent meeting at the Methodist church and would be glad to have him come. I sat down on the edge of the sidewalk in the hot sun and chatted with him awhile on various subjects, and on starting to leave asked him a second time to come to our meeting. He said that he would think about it. I had evidently made some impression on him. That night, when Sister Carlisle started to church, she chanced to pass where this same gentleman was, and asked him to go to church with her. He readily consented to do so, and that night remained in the after service, as the

ladies stayed, and soon some Christians were talking to him about his soul. He appeared excited for a time, but became penitent. He came back to the service the following night, and when the service was over he sought an interview with the pastor and surrendered his heart to God. He went to Dr. Mulkey's at eleven o'clock that night, and woke him up to tell him that God for Christ's sake had forgiven his sins. Dr. Mulkey had manifested some interest in him, and this same man (his name was Jim Ross) became an active worker in the meeting, and did much in bringing others in. So much for simply inviting him to church.

The conversion of Captain Slaughter was another notable event in this meeting. Sometime during the first week of the meeting Mrs. Slaughter, an Episcopal lady, came forward and asked me to pray for her husband. She said that she didn't know whether it would do any good or not; that she had prayed for him thirty years, and he still seemed untouched. She was simply discouraged. On the following Saturday morning, in the service held for the children, their little daughter, Fannie, was converted and asked me, while she was yet rejoicing in her new experience, to help her pray for her papa. That night, while I was moving among the people who had remained for the after service, I came to a gentleman with gray hair and beard almost white, and asked him if he was a Christian. He said that he was not. I asked him if he felt that he wanted to be one. He replied that he didn't know. I then asked him his name, and he answered, "Slaughter." I asked him if he was Captain Slaughter. He said that was the name he went by. I then pressed his hand in mine and told him I was praying for him,

and passed on to speak to others. On my return to the front he beckoned to me and said he wanted to speak with me further, but would not have time then, and asked me when he could see me at my room. An hour was fixed, and when the time was up he was at my door, and it didn't take him long to tell me the difficulties in his way; said that he had tried to be an infidel, and had denied the existence of a God. He acknowledged, however, that whenever he had gotten in trouble, or was brought face to face with danger, he always felt like praying for protection. He was in a storm at sea once when it seemed that their vessel would go down, and he lifted his heart and voice to God in prayer for deliverance, and somehow felt that his prayer would be answered. When the storm was over and the sea was calm again, he thought what a fool and coward he must be to deny the existence of a God when everything was favorable, and as soon as there was danger in sight begin to pray to the God whose existence he had denied. But this is the way they will do. A man may profess infidelity when all is sunshine; but let an old congestive chill get hold of him and shake him over hell awhile, and he will pray. But this man had some real difficulties. He could not understand the immaculate conception of Christ, the Son of God. He did not know why it was necessary for him to have been born into the world and grow up as other children. He thought God might have manifested himself in some other way without all this. The Lord helped me to explain to him, however, that it was necessary for our Saviour thus to be made acquainted with human suffering at every point in order to be a perfect Saviour; that if God had created him

a man and stood him up before men without any of these experiences incident to life it could have been said at once that he knew nothing of our sufferings as a race, and he could have properly been rejected; but that now "we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are." Captain Slaughter, although he had been a lawyer for forty years, and was occupying very important positions at the time in the practice of his profession, had never seemed to take hold of this thought before, but was quite ready now to acknowledge the reasonableness of the position or argument, and soon declared himself convinced, and was about to leave my room, as the time was up for our morning service, when I told him how little Fannie had been converted and how she had asked me to help her pray for him. At this the old lawyer wept and said: "Yes, God bless the dear child. She came home from that service and threw her arms about my neck and said: 'Papa, give your heart to God, and go to heaven with mamma and me.'" At this I asked him what he was going to do about it. He replied: "I am going to join the Church and go with my wife and sweet daughter to heaven." Thus we had another illustration of the truth of God's statement: "A little child shall lead them." Captain Slaughter did join the Church that day, and six years later, when I visited Kaufman again, I found him still an honored member and trying to direct his home for God.

While this work with Captain Slaughter was being accomplished, Captain Taylor, President of the First National Bank at Kaufman, became interested about his soul and came forward and gave his hand

for prayer and returned to his seat. He had hardly reached his seat when he came a second time and took a seat on the front bench with the other penitents and beckoned to me. When I reached him he said that when he got back to his seat in the congregation the feeling came over him that he was right in the way of some one else, and that as he didn't wish to become a stumbling-block to others he had come a second time to the altar in the same service. While he was relating this to me the city marshal had come from the same pew in the congregation and taken his place among the penitents and was happily saved that night and testified that Taylor's approach to the altar had influenced him to come. Captain Taylor was not converted that night, but came forward the next night, which was Saturday, and on the following morning (Sunday), at the close of the service, united with the Church without having made any public profession. I had preached that morning on the character of Job, and Taylor was very attentive and seemed greatly interested. I thought toward the rounding up I could see decision in his countenance, and so when the opportunity was given for people to join the Church he came forward. He was tall and commanding in appearance. There was an evident thrill of rejoicing in the hearts of the people, occasioned by this rather unexpected move on his part. That afternoon Captain Taylor was back at the service and came forward with others to give his hand to the penitents at the altar, and at the night service he extended the right hand of fellowship to those who were being received into the Church, and seemed as much at home in doing these things as if he had been in the Church

for quite a while. The next morning (Monday) he was at the ten-o'clock service, although he was president of a bank, and again in the afternoon I found him on the way to the service and asked him to give me something of his experience. I told him he had come forward for prayers a time or two, but had made no public profession of faith in any way except to unite with the Church, and I would like to have something more as to his experience. He related the circumstances about as I have told them as to his coming forward, etc., and added that on Sunday morning about the close of the sermon he decided that, as he had been a seeker from time to time for about twenty years, it was time for him to take some more decided stand, and that from then on, "feeling or no feeling," "blessing or no blessing," he intended to serve God to the very best of his knowledge and ability, whether he ever blessed him or not; and that about the time he had gotten this resolution thoroughly fixed in his mind Brother Hendrix opened the doors of the Church and he felt that the thing for one to do who fully intended to live a new life was to associate himself with those who were like-minded, and thus get all the help possible, and with this he had joined. He concluded by saying: "Brother Kilgore, this is the happiest day of my life. I am astonished I did not do this twenty years ago." Captain Taylor lived a consistent Christian life until three years ago, when his redeemed spirit went home to glory from Mexico, where he had gone for his health.

These things that have been recorded here, along with others, led to the great victory of which mention has been made. The Lord chooses his own way to

accomplish his own work in answer to prayer and in response to the efforts of his people.

In the meeting at Clarendon, Ark., a little thing happened that was both serious and amusing. A girl about fourteen years old, and well grown for her age, was converted and wanted to join the Church, but her mother opposed her in this, claiming that she was too young to take a step of this kind. The girl seemed very anxious about the matter and asked different friends to confer with her mother about it, which they did, but all to no avail, and on solicitation I went to the mother to try to prevail on her to let her daughter join the Church, but found her quite determined in her mind not to do this, stating as she did that the child was "entirely too young for such a step." That very night this same girl came to church with a young man six feet tall and who weighed a hundred and seventy pounds. "Fellow," you see—and this, too, with the consent of the mother—and yet she was too young to be a member of the Church. I have often been pained and grieved at such folly on the part of parents—and all this, too, as directly opposed to the plain teachings of Christ himself with reference to children being brought in early. I would rather lay my right arm on a block and have it taken off than to oppose one of my children in a step of this kind, as such responsibility is fearful in the light of God's word. May the Lord enable us to act wisely with reference to the training of our children on this subject!

NOTE.—There was an incident in connection with our meeting at Santa Ana that should have been mentioned in the chapter just closed, but doubtless it will be

of interest here. During our time there Mr. Moody was conducting a great revival in the city of Los Angeles, and at the close of our second week, on Saturday, I decided to go up, a distance of thirty miles, and hear him, as I could do this without missing a service in our own work. On closing our morning service I left for the train without any dinner, except a cup of coffee, and reached the city just in time for the afternoon service. Mr. Moody's subject was "How to Study the Bible," and he occupied a full hour, which was unusual for him, as I was informed afterwards. When he had concluded and had given the people an opportunity to shake hands with him, I looked at my watch and found it was only ten minutes until time for my train to leave, and I had a twenty-minute run on the street car to reach the station. So I saw I would be left if the train was on time, and there would not be another train on that road until Monday. This would be disastrous to my work at Santa Ana, and much depended on this every way. So I lifted my heart to God in earnest prayer to hold the train for me, and took the first car for the station as though nothing were wrong. I was not surprised in the least to find the train standing when our car reached the station, and I said to the conductor, who was standing on the platform: "Captain, your train is a little late pulling out." He replied: "Yes; we were ready to start on time, but received orders to hold up a little." I told him I was probably responsible for this delay. Some might call this fanaticism, but I call it faith. I have ever since fully believed that the good Lord held that train in answer to my prayers. But there was in store for me an experience that was anything

but pleasant. When our train reached Santa Ana, it was too late for supper. In fact, the people where I was stopping had already closed up and gone to church. So I had to go direct to the pulpit. When it is remembered that I had had neither dinner nor supper, and no opportunity to prepare otherwise for the pulpit, it can be easily seen how difficult it would be for me to conduct a service. When Brother Oats, our pastor there, informed me that there were present two or three M. E. Church (North) preachers (D.D.'s)—and this, too, the first time they had been with us—a sort of man-pleasing, if not man-fearing, spirit took possession of me, and my message was delivered with a feeling of embarrassment all through. Among other things, I tried to illustrate some point by reference to the building of the St. Louis bridge across the Mississippi River, and got tangled in this, so as not to make my point clear, and altogether the service seemed a complete failure. I went to my room that night quite despondent; and when everything was silent, Brother Oats remarked humorously: "Kilgore, I can tell you what was the trouble to-night." I asked him what it was. He replied: "You couldn't build that bridge." I then said: "Brother Oats, if you don't hush, I believe I will take the first train for home." I had a terrible case of the blues—and this, too, so soon after God had so signally answered my prayers in the matter of holding the train, as I believed. It was after Elijah's prayers had been answered with reference to the fire from heaven and the rain that he became disheartened and ran away from what he thought was danger and cast himself down under a juniper tree and wished that he might die. But there was yet a brighter day for

the Lord's prophet of old, and much remained to be done. Brother Oats, who is really one of the sweetest-spirited men I have ever worked with, laughed heartily at me, and seemed to enjoy all this to the fullest extent; and this was much better. We slept off all this trouble that night, and enjoyed one of the brightest, best days on the Sabbath following we had spent at all. A large class was received into the Church and everything seemed to work to our hand from then on to the close of our meeting. Indeed, it seemed that our victory was the more joyful because of these conflicts. The sun shines more brightly after the storm cloud.

CHAPTER XLV.

Additional Revivals.

Our first meeting after reaching home from California was at Greenwood, Miss., with Rev. G. W. Gordon. Brother Gordon was in good favor with his people; but the town was new, and made up mostly of a class of people who had gone there to make money rather than get religion, and there was much worldliness. During the meeting a gentleman who was a professed infidel, and who has since become conspicuous in the political world, celebrated his fifth marriage anniversary, which was attended with a "ball," and a large number of our Church people took part in the dissipations of the occasion, which as a matter of fact paralyzed our work to a great extent. I did not fail to pay my respects to all this on the following Sabbath, when I had the people present to hear what I had to say, and the sermon did not fail to bear fruit.

An amusing incident followed. In the afternoon of the same Sabbath a leading member of the Church, a lawyer, met a cultured lady at the church door when they were returning to the afternoon service, and asked her if they had any liniment at her home. She replied that she thought they did, and asked him if there was any trouble. He said, "None, except that I feel considerably bruised," referring to the effects of the sermon that morning. The lady laughed, and replied that they needed all they had at home. Sometimes it is

necessary to administer bad medicine in bad cases, though never pleasant to do so.

In the main our meeting here resulted well, as there were some valuable additions to the Church, and the faithful ones had their faith strengthened. It was here that my second son united with the Church at six years of age.

From here, after spending a few days with the loved ones at home, I went to Western Kentucky, and conducted a meeting at the little town of Water Valley with Rev. H. B. Johnston. The Lord gave us a decided victory here. Water Valley is the home of the Moss family, who have become famous in the Church, as some of its members have filled prominent places in the ministry. It was here that I first witnessed the extensive growth of tobacco, and some of the people gave decided attention to bee-raising and realized large profits from this industry, as there was frequently a very large yield of honey, the country being specially adapted to this, as evidenced by the honey being of the very choicest kind. I found Brother Johnston very companionable indeed. He has since filled some of the leading Churches in his Conference, at Jackson and Memphis, Tenn., and Paducah, Ky., and is now filling the Paducah District as presiding elder very acceptably.

During the meeting at Water Valley one or two incidents occurred which might be mentioned here. I was taking my usual stroll one morning, and passed a company of men working on the railroad (the section boss and his squad); and as I had always been taught to believe that railroad men were tough, I had a sort of dread of them, and simply tipped my hat and

passed on. This was repeated two or three mornings until Brother Johnston, the pastor, strolled with me one morning; and when we came to the working crew he stopped and said: "Brother Kilgore, hold up here. I want to introduce you to one of the biggest-hearted railroad stewards you ever met." Steward in the Church! And here I had been passing around them with feelings of fear. See what moral cowards we can be, and thus let the devil rob us of many an opportunity for doing good! I have lived long enough since that time to learn that some of the finest Christian characters in the world are connected with railroad work.

The other incident was that of a gentleman who at the close of a service at night, when an opportunity was given for any one to speak who might wish to do so, stood and said he didn't suppose it was expected that he should speak in a meeting like that, as he was only a sinner, but said he had thought he had some friends among the Christian people there, but that he had been among the seekers three nights in succession and not a man or woman had spoken a word to him about his soul or even given him his or her hand as a token of interest felt in him. He had thus become discouraged and went out of the meeting unsaved. What an awful reflection on the Church where people want to be saved and have no one to help them! And how awful the responsibility to be met at the judgment day! Let us watch lest we be weighed in the balance and found wanting. But while this dear man who might have been saved with the proper encouragement was left out, many others were brought in, and the meeting was not a failure by any means.

The next meeting was at Marianna, Ark., where the Lord was with us in great power. More than a half hundred were added to our Zion here, and a great work was accomplished. The good people of Marianna expressed their appreciation of my work there by contributing in a decent way to the support of those I love, which is not the case always, even where much good is accomplished. Rev. R. S. Deener was our pastor here.

The meeting over at Marianna, I went to Mississippi, and conducted meetings at Spring Hill Church, on the Grenada Circuit, with Rev. H. C. Morehead, and at Duck Hill. The meetings were both good; the one at Spring Hill was especially good. A large number were added to the Church.

I then went to a schoolhouse appointment on the Tillatoba Circuit to assist Rev. R. C. Morehead, where the Lord gave us a very great victory. One hundred and thirty-three united with the Methodist Church at this place and some joined other Churches. It was simply glorious.

From here I went to the old home Church again, on the Pittsboro Circuit, Chapel Hill, preached a week, and witnessed some good results.

Thence I proceeded to Slate Springs, where a very gracious work of grace was witnessed. Some prominent persons were among the converts here.

From Slate Springs I went to Atlanta and Wesley Chapel, on the Houston work, with Rev. Eugene Johnson, a noble fellow, pastor, where good meetings were held—some of the best of the season.

My next engagement was at Water Valley, Miss., where the Lord gave us a measure of success, although

there were obstructions in our way at this place which prevented a very great victory.

And so the year had passed. In all there had been more than a thousand converted in our meetings during the year, while eight hundred had united with the Methodist Church. Many pleasant incidents as well as some unpleasant ones had occurred in connection with the work during this year. I should like to mention them, but deem it hardly profitable. It was during this year that I was entertained in a palatial home for two weeks, with its brownstone front, Brussels carpets, and upholstered furniture, and every conceivable contrivance designed to beautify the home. I had imagined that in such a home happiness would reign supreme; but to my surprise I learned late in the second week of my stay there, and that too from the landlord himself, that the husband and wife of this splendid home had been living in separate rooms for more than two years. Separated, and yet living under the same roof! Here I witnessed again that wealth does not always bring happiness. "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

I failed to mention some other good meetings held in Arkansas during this year, at Brinkley and Cotton Plant and a very gracious meeting at Forrest City. Among other incidents I now recall of the work at Forrest City was that of a little girl who was happily converted and wanted to join the Church with many others who did join; but her mother, who seemed quite worldly and who had not been reached by the meeting, although the work was very great, opposed her little daughter in her desire to join. Three years later I

was there in another meeting when this same girl's father, who was the sheriff at the time, together with an uncle, who was a leading lawyer, united with the Church. This young mother also joined then, along with her little son, and she pleaded with this same daughter whom she had opposed before to come and join with them, but she would not come. Friend after friend talked with the girl and tried to persuade her to join, but she persistently refused, saying that as she could not join when she wanted to she would never do so; and notwithstanding the mother wept over her former folly, the girl, now a young lady, was left out, and seemed entirely rebellious. It is dangerous to oppose one in his or her religious convictions. I have witnessed quite a number of instances of this kind, but such things always give me pain.

The year ended, I was off for Conference at Oxford, Miss.

CHAPTER XLVI.

In the Delta.

The year just closed had been so abundantly crowned with success in revival work that I had not entertained the slightest notion of doing anything else; but I was not yet ready to sever my connection with the Conference. I was still very foolishly putting my connection with the Conference ahead of the voice of God. But I had not imagined there would be any further difficulty in the way of my sustaining the same relation I had the preceding year—supernumerary—and hence hadn't planned anything else; but to my surprise, and I must say great disappointment, when I reached the session of the Conference at Oxford I found a growing sentiment among our ministers against this kind of work; and was soon convinced, without having yet asked it, that I would not be given the supernumerary relation again. I never passed through a darker season at Conference before or since. I felt that God had given his approval of the course I had been pursuing by setting his seal on the work; while, on the other hand, the Church I had always loved so much opposed it to the finish; and I decided again to heed the voice of the Church and let it be held responsible at the final judgment for what I might have done and did not.

So I was again appointed to a work. As stated in a former chapter, I had purchased a home at Coffee-

ville, Miss., and was moving on very favorably in the way of paying for it; but this new act on the part of my Conference would necessitate my giving this all up, as I was appointed to another part of the Conference territory. My appointment for the year, as announced by Bishop Galloway, was at Hebron; but as there were some physical disabilities in the way of my serving that work, I was changed after the Conference had adjourned and placed at Australia and Duncan, in the Mississippi Bottom. This would be my first experience in the swamps as pastor. It wasn't long, however, until we had sold our home at Coffeeville, packed our goods, and were off for the new field of labor. Being advised by my presiding elder, however, not to take my family into the bottom with me, as my wife was already quite an invalid, I secured a home for them in Memphis, and traveled back and forth to serve the charge. It was the best work I had ever served up to date from a financial standpoint, and the year was in a general way a pleasant one. The people were very kind to us, and seemed to appreciate my work; but instead of preaching to multitudes, as I had the year before, and witnessing great numbers of conversions and additions to the Church, I preached this year to an average of about thirty people, and probably received a dozen into the Church in my own charge as the result of the year's work, which seemed to me to be a very small showing.

I was in only two meetings outside during this year —one at Corpus Christi, Tex., and the other at Atlanta, Miss. Both were quite successful. The invitation from Corpus Christi came exactly at the time when I could purchase a ticket for one fare for the

round trip, with thirty days' limit; and hence, although it was a thousand miles from our home in Memphis, I went, and the Lord wonderfully blessed my labors. The victory would have been even greater, however, if it had not been for the closing exercises of the schools being on just at the time. I have tried two or three meetings in different places during preparation for commencement exercises, and my candid judgment is that this is not a very favorable time for a meeting. At the other meeting mentioned, at Atlanta, Miss., I did not have this difficulty to contend with, and hence the victory was decided and easy.

On my return trip from Corpus Christi I had arranged, by invitation, to visit my sisters in Collins County, Tex. One of them was single and spending a while with the married one and her family, and they had all seemed anxious for me to come by. But I was feeling so very unwell when the time came that I decided to continue my return trip home, as my sister lived quite a distance out from the railroad, and I was afraid I would be sick away from home. It was, however, a great disappointment to them, as sister had arranged to play a trick on me. She was to be married, and the plan was to have everything in readiness and meet me at the gate, and have me perform the ceremony before going in. This would certainly have been a very great surprise, as I did not know she had any plan ahead to get married at all. It was all new. Of course if I had had any intimation of such thing I would have gone by at the risk of being sick rather than have her disappointed. When I heard from her after reaching home she was married, and it was quite a little while before I got to see her again.

While on our visit to the Atlanta meeting it was our (I mean myself and family) privilege to attend another one of Sam Jones's meetings at West Point. This was the third time I had been in his meetings. It was, as usual with him, a great meeting.

On my return to my charge I was accompanied by my brother-in-law, Prof. R. B. Smith, and succeeded in helping him secure a school among my friends at Carrollton, where he remained and taught successfully four years, and got a pretty good start in life's work, as the school paid him well.

During my year spent in the regular pastorate in the Bottom some very pleasant friendships were formed—notably with the Browns, the Doves, the Martins, the Deesons, and others. But I cannot pass this point without making special mention of David Allen and family. It has never been my pleasure to visit a more sunshiny home than this, and I was so favorably impressed with Brother Allen himself, both as a Christian gentleman and an honored citizen, that I named my baby boy for him, so that Allen is now a household word with us. This child's second name is Malone, for Brother A. L. Malone, a noble Christian gentleman of Jonesboro, Ark. If he makes as good a man as either of these gentlemen, I shall be satisfied.

We found Memphis a very pleasant place for residence, and Mrs. Kilgore's health was greatly improved during our stay there. I was very glad we did not move to the Bottom, as there was a fearful overflow in the Mississippi during the year, and we would have necessarily suffered great uneasiness, as the parsonage was located just inside the levee and many people were

compelled to move out, some having lost all their belongings. I never suffered so much anxiety in my life for a people as I did this year, and I hope I will never have to again. My visits to the charge in other respects were very pleasant.

I traveled on the boats up and down the river mostly, and found this delightful. The river men are so pleasant and accommodating. It was on the boat this year, however, that I witnessed the first round dancing, and I must confess that I looked on with astonishment and wondered how on earth parents can ever consent for their daughters to take part in such dissipations. I felt then and feel yet that I would prefer to see my only sweet daughter in her grave than to commit her to the ballroom as I witnessed it on the boat that night. Many other things occurred during this year that I should like to mention, but many things must be left unwritten.

At the close of this year I transferred to the White River Conference, hoping to secure a Sunday school agency or something else that would let me go foot loose and free in my chosen field; but in this I was disappointed again, as I was appointed to Jonesboro Station. Of this I shall write later, however.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Jonesboro Station.

A DESCRIPTION was given in a former chapter of a gracious revival held in this place three years previous to my appointment here as "preacher in charge." The meeting mentioned had in the providence of God opened the way for a number of other meetings almost equally successful, and also probably influenced this appointment; and if I had wanted a pastoral charge at all, there was not another one in the White River Conference I would have preferred to this. Jonesboro was at this time a growing young town of three thousand inhabitants, had a Methodist Church with more than three hundred members, and was located at the junction of railroads, giving easy access to all points, thus making it a very desirable charge. Circumstances were such, however, that we could not move to the charge at once, but remained in Memphis, a distance of sixty-four miles away, during the winter months. I filled the pulpit on Sundays, and kept up the work otherwise until we could move.

My board of stewards this year was composed of the following men: A. L. Malone, John Knight, Jerry Snyder, Les. Ware, Dock Anderson, Judge Brookfield, Tom Ellis, Jesse Gregg, and Dr. Luterlaw. It would be hard to select a company of wiser counselors from any congregation than is named here. I

found them all ready to respond to any call to duty, and they provided liberally for their pastor. Some of them have gone to their reward. They were among God's noblemen.

When I reached Jonesboro to fill my first appointment after Conference I was met at the train and taken to the home of A. L. Malone, where I was right royally entertained while in the city on this visit. A little incident occurred while here which left its impress on my life. I had used tobacco more or less all the way since I was a boy, and had never had any very serious convictions as to its evils. After supper that night I remarked to Brother Malone that I had forgotten to get anything to smoke and would therefore walk down town a little, as it was Saturday night and I knew I could make no arrangements before Monday if I did not go then. Brother Malone, with some evident surprise, replied that he didn't know I used tobacco at all. No one in his family ever touched it, as I learned later. But I went and got the cigars, and on my return to the home joined a Captain Winton in a social smoke in the family room, although if I had known the sentiment in the home on this line I would not have done so. Next morning in conversation something was said about some one being a member of the Church, when little Jamie, their bright-faced six-year-old boy, who seemed to have been paying but little attention to what was going on, raised his head and said: "Who? That old smoker a member of the Church?" I made no reply to this, but kept quite silent; but this was the beginning of the end of my tobacco habit. While I did not leave off the practice at once, yet with this impression made

from such an unexpected source everything that followed on this subject only influenced me the more.

Before I left this same home Dr. Stoddard—a clean-shaven, well-dressed, sober physician, who had called to invite me to take New Year's dinner in his home—when he saw me smoking said, with an appearance of disappointment: "I didn't know you smoked." Two weeks later I was standing in the front of a drug store in company with my own little boy, who had just asked me for a nickel and had been refused, I having said to him, "I can't be always giving you nickels," thinking to teach him a lesson in economy; but unintentionally I turned to the clerk in Jerry Snyder's drug store and said: "Give me a dime's worth of tobacco." So there I was refusing my little boy a nickel with which he wanted to buy something and turning instantly and spending two nickels for this filthy weed. My first impression when I had thought of how this looked was to return the tobacco to the clerk and quit then and there, as I would not have had my boy learn the habit for any amount of money—or at least I felt this way about it. But I kept the tobacco, and, without making any further reference to the matter one way or another, I gave my boy the nickel he had asked for, and thus paid my way to "Tarshish" with this. However, I began to form resolutions to quit. Two or three times during the next few weeks I threw my tobacco or cigars away without making mention of my convictions or these resolutions to any one; but I would soon buy another supply. It seemed that I didn't have sufficient will power to quit it.

In the fall of the same year at the session of the St. Louis Conference, at Sikeston, Mo., I was associated

with a Christian gentleman from Michigan who seemed to be filled with the Holy Ghost. He made some telling remarks as to the evils of this habit; and I slipped to the fireplace when no one was looking and put my piece of tobacco behind the grate, feeling that I would use it no more; but this resolution was also soon broken, and I continued its use until the following February, about two months from the time mentioned above. I was at Charleston, Mo., conducting a revival meeting, and was being entertained at the Kindrick House, one of the leading hotels of the place, and among the first things I did after reaching the house was to sit at the stove in the office in company with a number of others and smoke a cigar, and then another, and later still another. The hotel was kept by Mrs. Fletcher, whose son was clerk in the hotel and was not a Christian. Sister Fletcher was a member of the Methodist Church, and had expressed a hope that her boy would be brought in at this meeting, and hoped that my presence in the house would have an influence in this direction; but my smoking had made a wrong impression, as the young man did not use tobacco himself and was very much prejudiced against it. So I was sitting in the reading room just opposite the office writing my wife a letter when a number of persons—traveling men and others—had gathered about the stove, and were discussing the meeting, and some one remarked that these Christians would go whining around trying to get everybody to join the Church when in fact they were themselves no better than other folks—"they would chew as much tobacco and smoke as many cigars and do other things that were filthy and wicked just like other sinners."

Thus the conversation went on. I did not turn to see who was doing the talking, but had an idea that this young clerk at the hotel was taking part in it, and it is not necessary for me to say here that I did not smoke any more in the office of that hotel. But I went down to the church, and was smoking a cigar in the pastor's study when the presiding elder, who used tobacco himself, said to me: "Kilgore, you will have to be a little careful how you smoke here, as it is very offensive to Dr. Goldman" (the pastor). So I threw away the stub at once, and said: "Well, I won't smoke here, then." It seemed that they were after me. So I went to my room at the hotel, and thought I would have it all to myself; but about the time I had gotten in a good way smoking there some one rapped on my door, and when I opened it there stood three young men. One of them, a Christian, had brought his two young friends around to be instructed as to the plan of salvation, as they were among our penitents; but when they found my room full of tobacco smoke, they too expressed some surprise. I then began sure enough to feel that this habit was getting terribly in my way, and resolved to quit it. That same afternoon young Fletcher attended the service. It was the first time he had been to church since my arrival there; and while I wanted to reach him, I felt that I had gotten in my own way, as above mentioned, and so I told the people in the talk that afternoon that we all did wrong, but we must do better. I did this as a sort of apology before this young man; but our service at that hour seemed a failure when I wanted it to be a success. I went down to the pastor's study, in the basement of the church. It was a large brick church, with Sunday

school room and pastor's study in the basement and audience room above. I was now alone in the study long enough to reflect a little, and I took my piece of tobacco out of my pocket and threw it over the fence near by and threw a cigar over the fence, and dusted out my pockets and washed my mouth and beard, and said to myself, "Now I'll quit;" but something seemed to say to me (I reckon it was the devil): "Now, you are the biggest fool in town; you'll buy another piece to-morrow." This was the way I had been doing; and I think I wanted tobacco during the following half hour worse than I had ever wanted it. The temptation was fearful. I was almost persuaded even here to go and pick up the tobacco I had thrown away, but I said: "I won't, I won't; I'll be a man." Feeling my weakness and fearing that I would never be able to keep this resolution, I returned to the audience room above, closed the door after me, and went down in the altar, got down on my knees, and poured out my soul before God in earnest prayer for help to overcome this habit; and even in the midst of my prayer the desire for tobacco was strong. The battle was a hard one, but I continued in prayer until I must have been in agony. I got on my face in the altar, and begged God for help. I told him he had helped me overcome other habits, such as the dance, card-playing, whisky, profanity, and other things, and now I needed help for this. As I yet prayed I felt the power come, and began to realize myself a victor, and was soon on my feet saying aloud, though alone in the room: "Thank God, I'm saved from this habit! thank God, I'm saved!" And so I went down and went at once to the hotel to tell young Fletcher that if my

tobacco habit had been in his way it need not be any more, that I would use no more. That night I told my experience, and declared myself saved from this habit. For ten years I did not even touch tobacco with the ends of my fingers in any form, nor did I have the least desire for it. Whether the taste for tobacco was gone or not, I cannot tell; but I do know that I had no desire for it whatever. Young Mr. Fletcher became interested and was soon converted and joined the Church and was ever afterwards, as long as I went in and out at Charleston, among my best friends. After this I always had a home in his hotel without charge when I chose to go there. This same meeting at Charleston resulted in two hundred and fifteen additions to the Churches and a great upbuilding of the cause of Christ.

But I must get back to the continued record of my year and work at Jonesboro, as I have digressed from this to give this experience with the tobacco habit and the manner of my deliverance, hoping that my experience may be helpful to some one who may chance to read this chapter. Some may be ready to say one can do anything like this in the exercise of will power; but I did not seem to need any will power after I got this victory—this help from on high.

The year at Jonesboro was measurably successful, and was quite pleasant in every way. Some good meetings during the year resulted in adding a goodly number to the Church, and in every way the work was quite satisfactory, and specially pleasant from a social standpoint both for myself and family.

I was also in some very successful meetings this year with Rev. J. H. Anderson at Harrisburg and Vandale,

Ark. These two meetings together resulted in bringing more than a hundred into the Methodist Church. At Vandale we witnessed twenty-five happy conversions in a single service, and among these were some of the leaders of the town—the Hains, the Vanns, and others. Some of them were notable cases, and will probably be mentioned later on. Many other things occurred during this year that I should like to mention, but I suppose I will have to pass them by.

I had announced early in the year that I would not be their pastor another year, as I had decided to locate, if necessary, in order to engage in revival work altogether, as I still felt that God had called me to this special line of work and I had a love for it as well. And so the year rounded up with this decision in my mind. But on the way to the Conference session at Newport a presiding elder from the St. Louis Conference approached me and asked me to allow myself to be transferred to that Conference to take charge of Cape Girardeau Station, which had been left without a pastor by the brother appointed to the charge having transferred to another Conference. I had no idea of doing this; but this elder insisted that this move would give me access to some new territory in my evangelistic work later on, and that he would open the way for me to hold some meetings in his district, and he also secured the influence of the presiding bishop in the matter; and through their joint efforts I was persuaded to accept this change, greatly to my own surprise. It wasn't long until everything had been rounded up at Jonesboro, and we were off for Cape Girardeau, of which I will write in my next chapter. I only wish to say here that, while the year was a hard one in many

respects, it did open the way to a large number of meetings in Missouri and other points farther north, the record of which will be given hereafter.

An Incident.—One day while I was in charge of the Church at Jonesboro a gentleman called at the parsonage and said he wanted me to go with him. I asked him if there was anything special he wanted with me. He said there was. I gave him ample time to tell me; but as he did not do this, I finally asked him what the trouble was, as he looked serious. He replied that he would inform me later, and insisted that I get ready to go at once. I asked him how far it was, thinking it was in some part of the town; but he told me it was a mile or two out. I asked him if he had brought any conveyance. I had just reached home from the District Conference at Paragould, where I had engaged in some hard work, and was quite worn and jaded, and did not feel like making such a trip anyway. He informed me that he had no conveyance, but insisted that I must go anyway, but would not yet make known to me his mission. So I went to the stable and secured a rig and took him in with me and went to his home, which proved a distance of three miles, and that too over some very rough roads. I am sure he did not speak a dozen words on the whole trip. I could not imagine what he meant, and yet tried to imagine many things; and while I tried to make it as light as possible, I confess I did not feel entirely comfortable. I had been compelled to rebuke some parties in my congregation on the preceding Sunday night, and did not know but that there might be some mischief in this fellow's mind toward me. Then I would try to imagine

that there was probably a marriage ahead. But my suspense was only intensified when we had reached the man's gate and he hopped out of the buggy, and, starting away in an opposite direction over the hill, told me to hitch my horse and go in, not waiting to go in and introduce me to his family. But I went in and awaited his return. It was but a little while until he came in, and after I had waited a proper time I told him he must tell me what he wanted with me, as it was necessary for me to return home to look after some matters there. Upon this he informed me that he wanted me to baptize him and his wife and five children. One of the children, a daughter, was old enough to choose for herself, and hence had to be consulted, as I felt; but I found that she had been converted previous to this, and was ready to receive baptism. The wife and mother also consented to the act, and so I placed them and began with the father and on down to the youngest child, thus baptizing him and his household "straightway." This done, I was ready, after some words of instruction to the family, to return home. But he did not let me leave until he had filled my buggy with fruit, chickens, etc.; and thus I was paid for my trip.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Cape Girardeau.

As stated in the last chapter, this year in the St. Louis Conference was in many respects one of the hardest years of all my work in the ministry. In the first place, Cape Girardeau was an exceedingly difficult field to serve at this time. True, we had a town with a population of five or six thousand; but our Church was very weak numerically, and the membership poor. There were seven Protestant denominations in the town, and they were all weak numerically and financially, as the Roman Catholics were largely in the majority, unless we except the Lutherans. Hence they had an overshadowing influence over everything, dominating every public enterprise, and therefore rendering it almost next to impossible for our people to do anything worth mentioning. Still we tugged along and held our own.

We reached the Cape just in the beginning of a very cold spell; and as our goods were delayed somewhat in reaching us, we were taken into the homes of some of our people and kindly entertained until the goods came. But as we had not planned for such a cold snap and were considerably exposed in reaching our stopping places, some of my family were attacked with la grippe, to start with, I being one of the number. When the day came for us to go into the parsonage, I went a little in advance of my family, and when they

reached there I was in bed, where I remained for two weeks or more; and all this time there was a heavy snow on the ground. Our little daughter was also down with la grippe. Our parsonage was right on the brow of a high hill, and was known as the "Eagle's Nest." The house was built in 1811, and hence was eighty-one years old when we occupied it. It was a brick structure, however, and, though quite small, still was comfortable. The house was standing at the time of the earthquake of 1811, and was still unshaken. Going in as we did, and at this time, there had been no time to provide fuel for such extraordinarily cold weather; and as everybody else was shut in to a great extent, we had some difficulty in keeping ourselves supplied.

As soon as I was able to get out again and the cold wave was somewhat broken, I began a meeting in our church, that I might in this way have a better opportunity to make the acquaintance of the people whom I had been sent to serve. The meeting was good, and fifteen or twenty persons united with our Church.

It was not long until I was sent for to assist in a meeting at Charleston, Mo., of which mention has been made in a former chapter, where two hundred and fifteen united with the Churches. This opened the way for other meetings during the year at Morley, Fredericktown, Jackson, and Sikeston—all in the Charleston District and all more or less successful. This was notably true of the meeting at Sikeston, where more than a hundred were added to the Church. This meeting was in session at the time of the great "landslide" election of Grover Cleveland to the Presidency of the United States; but the election seemed

to have absolutely no effect on the meeting. It simply went sweeping on to greater victory to the close.

It was at Sikeston that I first met with Rev. Richard Wilkerson, now serving a large city Church, he having just arrived in this country. I put him down then as being one of the finest of Christian characters as well as an able minister of the gospel; and although I afterwards had the pleasure of entertaining him in my home and have since been very kindly entertained in his home, I have never had reason to change my mind from the first impression he made on me. He afterwards assisted me in a meeting at Osceola, Ark., and did some fine work. This was another meeting of this same year, and was a glorious victory itself. Some old difficulties were settled, the Church was greatly revived, and a large number were added to the membership. Rev. James F. Jernigan was closing his fourth year in this pastorate, and was in great favor with the people. I had been associated with Jernigan before, and always found him to be a very genial companion and a devout Christian.

Dr. John M. Crowe was in charge of our Church at Sikeston, Mo., when I held the meeting there, and was then and is now one of the most brilliant men in all our ministry. I have found it very helpful indeed to be associated with such consecrated and cultured men as those whose names occur in connection with these meetings.

I assisted in other meetings during this year at North Little Rock and Forrest City, with fine results at both places, especially at the last-named place. This was my second visit to Forrest City in this line of work, and hence I was by no means a stranger there.

I cannot say the Church was prospering at Cape Girardeau all this time, however. But the compensation was so small there anyway that I would have been compelled to get out and in some way supplement my salary, even if I had not engaged in these meetings; and besides all this absence from the charge on my part, my wife's health had broken again to such extent that I was compelled to move her from there about the middle of the year, being so advised by her attending physician. Hence I had carried her and the children back to Memphis, where we remained this time more than two years. Leaving Cape Girardeau with them, the trip was made down the Mississippi River on board the "City of Monroe." The trip was delightful. This was the first river experience some of my family had ever enjoyed, and they were all charmed with the trip. We were on board the vessel three days, and, except the difference in time, found it much cheaper than a railroad trip and much more pleasant. I returned to the Cape, however, and filled out the year's work, except the absences already recorded; and even then I always tried to arrange to have the pulpit filled on Sundays.

When the Conference came I asked for a supernumerary relation again, and secured it, and hence was free to work in revivals another year and still hold my connection with the Conference. The session of the St. Louis Conference this year was at Kirkwood, and Bishop Galloway presided. Kirkwood is beautiful for situation; but the Conference was not up to the average in point of interest. The citizens paid but little attention to its sessions or religious services, and the preachers did not appear very spiritual themselves.

Bishop Galloway observed more than once that he had never seen the members of any Conference less attentive to the work of its sessions or less spiritual, and seemed to deplore the fact. However, there were some strong sermons and addresses delivered during the session, as there were some very strong representative men connected with the body as well as visiting ministers of like ability.

So the work of another year is finished, and thus the books of life are being written and we are all passing on down to the wind-up of all things earthly so far as we are concerned. No doubt many mistakes are made as the years come and go—mistakes, too, that we would correct after they are made if this were possible—but as we can never be perfect in judgment, we will simply have to let these things go down as among the sins of infirmity and go on and try to profit by these experiences and trials.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Serious Sickness and More Work.

In the closing up of the work of the year recorded in the preceding chapter I was dispatched home to a sick child—the baby. Soon after I reached home my wife, who had already been overtaxed with watching and who was herself surcharged with the same malarial influences, succumbed to the disease, and this was soon followed by two more of the children, and then still two others—all five down with malarial fever —while the baby was only convalescent, and hence fretful and hard to satisfy. It took three rooms to accommodate the crowd, as our rooms were small and we had to arrange thus. This necessitated three fires being kept up day and night, as the weather was very cold. After one week's watching, however, two of the children began to improve, but I thought seriously for several days that I was going to lose their mother and the other two children. I had no help except a hired cook. I wrote for my wife's mother, but she was sick and could not come. I also sent for her brother, who was a physician, but he was so circumstanced that he could not come. I was about to break down myself, as this tremendous strain had now been on more than two weeks, and I was worn out in protracted meeting work to begin with. But by this time the other two children had taken a change for the better, and it was but a few days before I began to

have them at the table with me; but my wife was still quite sick, and I telegraphed her sister at West Point, Miss., for help, and she sent her daughter, who spent quite a while with us and was a great comfort to us as well as help. The good Lord very graciously restored them all to me and made it possible for me to get out to work again. Praise his name for his great goodness in bringing us through this awfully trying period!

Up to this time it had always taken all I could get and more to meet financial demands, owing to the invalid condition of my wife, as she was nearly always entirely incompetent to look after anything, so that frequently our income was not sufficient to meet the demands; but then we could usually catch up at some other point where this had been the case, and in this way make the years round up favorably. But when the siege of sickness came at Memphis, as above described, and where our expenses were tremendously great, I began to find myself embarrassed in a way that was both provoking and unmanageable, only as I could borrow from time to time so as to keep these matters transferred, and working all the time as I did to try to bring in sufficient funds from the field to keep these obligations from growing, even if I couldn't settle them all off. But the beginning of the end in my wife's case had come, as she was never well again, although she lived after this nearly four years. It was, therefore, a "tug of war" all the way from this on with us from a financial standpoint. While, as may be seen in future chapters, the Lord blessed my labors in a very gracious way after this, still the compensation for the work was not suffi-

cient to meet current expenses and settle these back claims. But I tried to manage them by transferring them from time to time, as above suggested, hoping all the time I would finally become able to settle all and be free again, and so we pass into a new year.

My first engagement, after the recovery of my family sufficiently for me to leave home, was at Chico, Tex., with Rev. Ben H. Bounds, with whom I had worked in meetings before, and our meeting here was a decided victory. The work was begun in the Methodist church, which was itself a good-sized house of worship; but, although it was winter time and the weather cold, the people came in such great numbers that it was soon very evident that we would have to find larger quarters to accommodate the crowds, and we secured the use of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, which was much larger, and the meeting thus continued until we had scored a great victory. This opened the way to other points in Texas and elsewhere. An incident occurred here at the closing service which resulted in such a way as to be made quite impressive. A gentleman who had, with his wife and probably other members of his family, been converted during the meeting and united with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church came to where I was sitting inside the altar and dropped on his knees at my side, saying that he wanted me to go to Rives, Tenn., and hold a meeting. I thanked him, but informed him that it was not my custom to go to places to hold meetings without an invitation, to which he replied that they had a lot of kinsfolk there and would see that I got an invitation. I then told him it would be necessary for the invitation to come from our pastor there, or I could not accept it. He then stated

that Brother Bonner, of Chico, where this meeting was being held, a father in the Church, had a son at Rives, who was a Methodist and quite prominent, and that through him he was certain the matter could be worked, and said furthermore that he felt I must go. He said he had an aged father at Rives who was not in the Church and who had always been wicked, and he had been impressed that if I would go there and hold a meeting his father would be saved; and that he also had a brother there out of the ark of safety, and said again that I must go. He took out his pocket-book and put six dollars in my hand, stating that it would take this amount to pay my railroad fare from my home in Memphis to Rives, and that he wanted to pay this for me. I told him to keep his money, that something might happen to prevent my going; but he still insisted that I must go, and left the money in my hand. The name of this brother was Frank Dickey. We may see the results of all this later on in this same year, and I only say here that the invitation did come and the meeting was held at Rives, a description of which will be given in its proper place.

From Chico I went to Alvord, a distance of only fourteen miles, to conduct a meeting for Rev. W. T. Ayers. I was accompanied to this place by Brother Bounds, who remained only a day or two, however, and returned to his own charge. The work at Alvord moved off slowly, but increased steadily until it became the greatest meeting in the history of the town, as testified to by the oldest citizens. A great number were added to the Church, and dear Brother Ayers and his people were happy. Brother Ayers is a noble fellow, and his wife isn't a whit behind him. It is

easy to work with people like them. We had adopted the plan of holding cottage prayer meetings here in the afternoons at such places as were offered for this purpose. Early in the history of the meeting I was dining in a home one day where I had been invited by the Christian husband, and while seated at the dining table I asked a lady sitting next to me if she expected to attend the cottage prayer meeting that afternoon, just across the street. Her reply was that she thought she would remain there and let our hostess go, if she would; but after a moment's pause she said she was afraid she wouldn't go. I then remarked: "O yes, she'll go." I asked her if she had been attending our meeting. She said she had not. I then told her she was "missing half of her life," that we were having a glorious meeting and that she should come, when she replied with decided firmness that she would not attend. I then, just for a little pleasantry, told her that if she would go she could go with me, and her reply to this was: "That would be an inducement, wouldn't it?" She was afterwards persuaded by her friends to go; and, as the Lord would direct, we had the Bible lesson of Ruth and Orpah that afternoon. The lesson got hold of this beautiful young wife and mother so that she surrendered her young heart to God in that service, and afterwards did not miss a service during the entire meeting, often bringing her little children to church with her in order to make it possible to attend. Novel-reading had been her trouble. She was wasting her young life, feeding her mind on trash; but the evening after her coversion she went home and made kindling of her novels, such as she had been reading; and when a friend, who did not

know of her change, brought her a new novel of the same kind and offered it as a present, she took it and, asking his pardon, put it behind the back log, stating to him that she had changed her life. She bought a new Bible and subscribed for the *Texas Christian Advocate* and the *Woman's Missionary Advocate,* and thus began to lead a new life. She became Secretary of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Church where she lived; her husband afterwards became a minister of the gospel and is now a member of the North Texas Conference. This is Rev. Luther Hamilton.

The presiding elder of the district, Rev. R. M. Powers, was passing through the community and spent a day or two in the above meeting, which gave rise to my being invited to go at once, when through at Alvord, to the assistance of Rev. G. S. Sexton at St. Jo, where a meeting was already in progress. My route from Alvord to St. Jo was via Henrietta, Tex., where I spent the night and heard a lecture by a Roman Catholic priest. It was a fine lecture, but not a true representation of their teachings or faith, but rather sugar-coated to suit the people to whom it was delivered, as is usually the case with them. I reached St. Jo on Wednesday morning and found Brother Sexton at the station to meet me. He seemed very glad to see me, and gave me a pleasant place to stay, in the home of one of his parishioners. I found Brother Tom Puryear from Jonesboro, Ark., living here. He seemed very glad to see me, as eight members of his father's family had been brought into the Church under my ministry at Jonesboro, including the father himself. Brother Tom did everything possible to make my stay at St. Jo pleasant.

Brother Sexton and his helpers had laid the foundation deep and strong for a good work, and hence in a few days, building on the foundation, we had, by the assistance of divine grace, added fifty-one to the membership of the Methodist Church at St. Jo. Twenty-six grown young people were received in one class on the closing Sunday afternoon. It was truly inspiring. Our organist during the meeting was a beautiful Baptist girl, daughter of a Baptist minister, and at the close of the meeting the members of our Methodist choir made her a present of a nice gold watch, and had me to present it before the congregation at the closing exercise, just before the final benediction. Thus another victory had crowned my work, and I was off for my Tennessee home. The route was via Dallas, where I spent an hour pleasantly in the office of the *Texas Christian Advocate,* with that prince of editors, Rev. J. W. Hill. Brother Sexton accompanied me as far as Jefferson, Tex., where he was going to visit his affianced. He was married there soon afterwards. I was soon at home again to spend a few days with the loved ones after an absence of seven weeks.

CHAPTER L.

More Meetings.

After spending a little time at home with the loved ones, I left again to fill an engagement with Rev. S. F. Brown at Rector, Ark. Rector is a pretty little town on the Cotton Belt Railroad near the Missouri line, and is made up of an excellent class of people, as are all those towns on Crowley's Ridge all the way from Missouri to Helena, Ark. My home while at Rector was in the pleasant home of "Billie Cox," and he and his accomplished wife and daughter and noble son did all they could to make my stay pleasant. I can never forget their unstinted kindness to me while there. We were in a good meeting almost from the beginning. Among our first converts I recall the name of Mr. Barlow, a lawyer. Mr. Barlow was said to have been quite wicked, and afterwards confessed this himself, but his conversion was clear and powerful. He was soon called on to pray and exercise otherwise in public during the meeting, and was powerful in prayer and seemed to enjoy great freedom in all he attempted to do. He was a man of very strong intellect, and seemed quite willing to turn all this in favor of the right. The day following his conversion I was invited to dine at his home; and when we were all seated at the dinner table and the blessing had been asked, conversation turned to the meeting and reference was made to the number of converts already re-

ported. Sister Barlow, who had begun to serve the coffee, pushed the cups back and began to praise God, and we all joined her in praising him, and so we would eat a little and shout a little, and thus "we did eat our meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved." (Acts ii. 46, 47.)

We were in the apostolic succession here. Mr. Outlaw, the druggist, was saved and the Barbers and still others from public places, until the meeting began to be the topic of conversation in every place, and the whole town was moved. About this time Mrs. Allen stood up in the congregation near the altar during a testimony meeting, and with one hand raised toward heaven and trembling, with a shower of tears on her face, said: "I must have my husband; I must have my husband." Ed Allen (her husband) was one of the meanest of men, if reports were true—and these he did not deny. He had been known to lie flat on his back in his home on Sundays and compel his sweet daughter to go to the saloon for liquor under severe threats if she failed to do so, and this was the man for whom prayer was so earnestly asked. But I saw Ed Allen two days later in the meeting stand up on the opposite side of the altar from the chancel and seem to swell up and puff and blow, when finally he said, "I shall have to talk or burst," and continued until he had made a full confession and was mightily saved. Of course there was much rejoicing over these conversions, and the work increased until one hundred and twenty odd had reported themselves saved and nearly a hundred had been added to our Church.

One evening Jerry Snyder, a religious little druggist from Jonesboro, was conducting the meeting, and he said he thanked God he was "chock-full of religion"—"just ground it up" with his prescriptions—and any one who knew Jerry Snyder at that time knew this was about as nearly true as it could have been of any one. The leader that afternoon told us all to go home and at a proper or convenient time go to our rooms or some secret place of prayer and remain there in prayer until we obtained a new blessing from God, and then bring the blessing to church with us. I went to my room in company with this same Jerry Snyder, and we did remain in prayer until God gave us a very great blessing. As we went to church I remarked to Snyder that I did not feel physically strong enough to go into the service, and he replied that God didn't need my physical strength to run his work, that *he* was our strength; and sure enough that night we had no sermon, no proposition, no invitation for penitents, but we did witness wave after wave of divine power, so that many shouts of praise went up to God. When a proposition was made for converts, thirty-one by actual count came down the aisle and gave their hands to thus testify that God for Christ's sake had pardoned their sins, and thus the work was made glorious. I had the pleasure of visiting Rector again a few months later. I was just passing through when they announced an appointment for me to preach. I saw Sister Allen stand again near the same place in the church and thank God for the meeting. She said that she had one of the happiest homes in Arkansas, that her husband had erected a family altar in their home, and that they had a different home in every way; and the last I

heard from Ed Allen he stood like the everlasting mountains for God and the right.

Notwithstanding all this manifest power and these wonderful demonstrations, there were then, as are always in every place, some left unsaved. One man connected with the saloon business stood on the street in front of the church door, and in conversation with some of his kind, but in hearing of some of the Christian workers, cursed the meeting; and the following night, after the meeting had closed and the ministers were gone to their homes, the wife of this same man started to retire and found her husband dead in bed. He had turned a deaf ear to the divine call, had slighted this great and last opportunity, and had cursed God and died. Poor deluded soul!

From Rector I returned to Memphis and conducted a two weeks' meeting for Rev. R. M. King at Pennsylvania Avenue Church, where another victory was won for Christ and his cause. Under the first call for penitents twenty-one came forward and knelt at the altar; and but for a fire alarm given soon after they had reached the front, some would doubtless have been saved that night; but this disturbed the meeting and the service soon closed. But on the following night twenty-two came forward and twenty-one of them professed conversion. For six consecutive nights an average of twenty conversions was reported, and the meeting before it closed resulted in adding more than a hundred to the membership of Brother King's Church. It is but doing justice to others to state here, however, that we were working in the wake of one of Rev. Sam Jones's meetings held in the city, and the victory was an easy one. These conversions were at the altar, after

the old mourners' bench style, however, not simply holding up the hand in the congregation, as is so often the case in counting conversions. I have always stressed old bed-rock regeneration; and as Brother Jones's meeting had left a great impression on the minds of the people, we had a fine opportunity to follow up the work and witness the above results. Among the seekers in this meeting was an old sailor who had spent most of his life at sea. He seemed quite penitent, and would come almost running down the aisle to the altar and fall on his knees weeping. This went on into the second week of the meeting. He had finally given his name for Church membership, but continued to come to the altar as a seeker until one rainy afternoon we were in a service. There were but few, comparatively, present; but the interest was fine, and this old sailor was powerfully converted. When the service was over he went out through the rain and down the street, and when any one would speak to him he would exclaim: "Glory to God!" Even when one would say, "Good afternoon, Captain," he would reply: "Glory to God!" Another notable instance of conversion in this meeting was that of a beautiful Jewess, whose conversion was very bright. At the altar, where she was kneeling as a penitent, she expressed a desire to join the Methodist Church, but was not allowed to do this by her parents. She afterwards united with the Episcopal Church, however. This meeting gave me an opportunity to spend some time at home with my family, and at the same time be engaged in the work.

My next engagement was with Rev. R. P. Witt at Kennett, Mo. Like most Methodist ministers, I found

Brother Witt quite companionable and easy to work with. I was entertained this time at the parsonage, and our daily associations were very pleasant indeed. Sister Witt was very kind to me, and she knew how to be. God bless these preachers' wives! They deserve as much of the credit for any success their husbands may have as the husbands do themselves, for they make it possible for them to have success. On the other hand, if a wife happens to be out of harmony with her husband in the work, she can do as much to hinder and cripple him in his work as all other influences taken together. Some lives that would otherwise have been noble and useful have been wrecked in this way; but this, thank God, is the exception and not the rule. We found Sister Witt among that noble band of women who are helpful rather than hurtful to their husbands in the work. I had a feeling from the beginning that the meeting at Kennett would be another victory for Christ. It did not look so at first, however, as their church—and it was not a large one—was not more than half filled at the first service. I told them of my feelings, however, and told them I was sure they would have to provide a larger room before we had gone far with the work. At this there was a visible smile over the congregation. Next night, however, the attendance had greatly increased, and while the church was not yet full I made inquiry as to where we could secure some additional seats. Being informed that we could get as many chairs as we might find need of from a certain hall, arrangements were made at once to have them brought and placed in the church until all available space was occupied. So the next day the wagon, loaded with chairs, made

two or three trips through the business part of the town, although we had not needed one of them yet; but that night the church was sure enough filled to overflowing, and I told them again that my only fears had been all the time that we would not have room for the people who would want to attend, and that, while I did not wish to put any one to any more trouble than possible, I thought the best thing to be done at once was to make some investigation as to whether a larger place could be secured for the meeting. I was informed early next morning that the courthouse could be had for the purpose, and that day all arrangements were made for moving the meeting to the courthouse. By this time there began to be some manifest excitement about the meeting and the interest in the service was good. In the meantime the gospel was being preached with all the earnestness I could command, and its efforts were already visible in the conviction of sinners and the resuscitation of the Church, and thus the work went on and increased until there were many seeking religion and large numbers being added to the Church. While their new courthouse, where the meeting was now being held, was large and well arranged, still there was not standing room about the doors for the people who wanted to attend and could not get seats. The people came from miles around to attend the meeting. The number added to the Church was large. Just here I had an experience I hope never to have again. I had made an engagement to conduct a meeting at New Madrid, Mo., immediately following this one, giving full time for the two meetings, as I thought; but when the time was about up for me to go to the new place our meet-

ing at Kennett was just as its height of interest, with a very large number of penitents, and so I wrote our pastor at New Madrid and wired him of the situation, stating to him that it looked like murder in the first degree to close our meeting at this point. But he wired back that it would be murder in the first degree at that end of the line if I failed to come to him as promised, and so I left them at Kennett, and went on to fill my engagement at New Madrid, and worked there hard for ten days and witnessed only one conversion. We would have continued the effort longer, although it appeared almost fruitless, but there was a rise in the river, so that the water backed in on the town in a way to obstruct travel, and we thought it useless to continue.

Thus I had left the meeting where God was wonderfully manifesting his presence and power to go to this place of failure. I felt that this was a kind of rebuke for having in this way regarded the voice of man rather than God. We sometimes make appointments to suit our own convenience without consulting the Holy Ghost as to whether it is in harmony with his will or not, and at other times, as in the above instance, leave places where God has made known the fact that it is his time to favor Zion. We need wisdom from above for these things, and then the grace of courage to always carry out our convictions, being led by the Holy Ghost. The victory, however, was already great at Kennett, and if there was any mistake in the above matter, we must "let bygones be bygones," and hurry on to other fields.

Our next meeting was at Poplar Bluff, with Rev. Allen McFarland as preacher in charge. Brother Mc-

Farland is a South Carolinian, and a noble fellow he is. Poplar Bluff is a pretty town, located among the hills of Missouri, with a population of five thousand at the time this meeting was held. Many pleasant recollections are associated with this occasion; and while the work ought to have been much greater with the amount of material we had to work with, still the meeting was by no means a failure, as seventy-three persons were added to the membership of the Methodist Church there and the Christian people were encouraged in their lives. One thing occurred here, however, I wish to record. There was a fallen woman, daughter of a deceased minister of the gospel whose name is familiar throughout all our borders, whose life had been wrecked, and she was now living down in the slums. But doubtless wearied with such a life, she came under the influence of our meeting, and at a daytime service came forward in the deepest apparent penitence and professed conversion; and later, when the importance of young converts uniting with the Church was being stressed in a general way, this woman, with evident embarrassment, came forward and gave her hand and name for membership in the Church. Some of her own sex took fright and declared that their Church would be ruined by the addition of such a person to its membership. Strange, indeed, how women will thus feel and act toward one of their own sex who has thus been unfortunate. Let an old drunken, debauched devil of the opposite sex make any demonstration in the direction of a change, and they will join the others in making a parade over him; but let one of their own number fall, and they will ostracize her forever, and no effort on her part to reform will

be considered. This is true at least in many places, and was true in the case mentioned above, as a conference was held among the women of the Church, her application considered, and she was rejected. I am not informed as to what ever became of her, but I am sure she went away from this Church discouraged. I have witnessed similar cases during my ministry at other places. But the meeting at Poplar Bluff and the record made there for good or bad is over now, and I am at home again. These visits home are the resting seasons in this busy life. It is so sweet to be in the bosom of one's own home, where there is sunshine; and, on the other hand, it is only a feeling of divine call to this work that could ever make one willing to suffer such privations. We have but one short life to live in this world, which will soon be over, and for one to spend this away from those he loves is truly a great privation; and yet there are those who seem to think that it is mere playhouse business and that it is chosen for ease. But after extended experience on all these lines I feel prepared to tell the reader that there are many things connected with this kind of work that are by no means pleasant, and there is frequent occasion to desire that "rest that remains for the people of God." But I must close here and write of other work in future chapters.

CHAPTER LI.

The Work Multiplies.

I was soon off for Prescott, Ark., where a good meeting was held with Rev. Horace Jewell. Brother Jewell was without doubt one of the most saintly men I ever worked with. Here too I enjoyed the associations of that princely minister of the gospel, Rev. George W. Hill, who was serving the district as presiding elder and whose home was at Prescott. The companionship of such men could not be otherwise than helpful. It was also at this meeting that I first became associated with Rev. Thomas O. Owen, who afterwards traveled with me in Missouri, Arkansas, and Tennessee as chorister, and whose companionship I found to be very helpful in a social way, to say nothing of the splendid work done by him in the service of song. Brother Owen is a graduate of Hendrix College, and a more manly man I have never met. The meeting at Prescott resulted in a good ingathering to the Church, and friendships were formed here which have made life sweeter and better, and I was strengthened for the work elsewhere.

The next meeting was at Conway, Ark., where J. B. Stephenson had charge. Brother Stephenson is gentle as a lamb and yet courageous as a lion. My home while at Conway was with Sister Lincoln, whose large home was filled with select boarders and was always full of sunshine. One of the special features of this

meeting was the sunrise service, when the house of worship was usually well filled with early worshipers, who had come in the freshness of the new morning to thus give the first fruits of the new day to God in the form of prayer and praise. Another item of interest was the social meetings in the homes of the people after the evening services at the church were closed, and penitents were taken to these social meetings, where they were prayed with and instructed sometimes till a late hour at night. I remember in the home of Rev. J. H. Anderson, at such a time as this, one night at a late hour five young men professed conversion, and there was much rejoicing on the part of the workers as well as the young converts, and in this way the work was made quite successful here.

When through at Conway and after a brief visit home again, taking my little boy, who had attended the meeting or spent the time at Conway with me, I was soon off to Magnolia, Ark., where I witnessed one of the most superb victories of the year. Rev. O. A. Goddard was in charge, and had planned well for the work. They had a beautiful new church to hold the meeting in, and the Lord led us at every step. In the early history of the meeting we instituted a meeting for the men, to be held in the other houses of worship in the town during the afternoons, while the women would meet and engage in similar services at the Methodist church. It was but a day or two before the men had witnessed several conversions in their meetings, and the writer went to conduct the service for the ladies one afternoon and found them ready and ripe for a great meeting. Early in this service, without any great effort on my part, the

Holy Spirit was poured out first on the choir or singers and swept out over the congregation until I do not believe it would be much exaggeration to say that there were anywhere from fifty to seventy-five persons shouting at one time, and many of these represented the best element of the town. There were several conversions reported as one of the results of the service. One Catholic young lady was converted. Of course the work there took deeper hold on the town and surrounding country, and went on until one hundred and seventy souls had been numbered with the saved and more than a hundred added to the roll of membership in our Church. Among the many who had been seekers during this great meeting was the conductor on the branch road leading to this place and connecting the town with the Cotton Belt at McNeil Station. The distance is only five miles. This conductor, though very penitent, had not been converted up to the time of my leaving, but the work was to be continued under other leadership, and when my train had reached the station on the main line, where I would have some time to wait for the through train, this conductor came to me and said he wanted to talk with me. He said he wanted help, and that he did not want the meeting to close and leave him in this unsaved condition. Upon this we went into one of the coaches of his train alone, and I began to try to instruct him in the plan of salvation, giving him several passages on faith and salvation through faith; and when I had reached a certain point and was stressing a passage from the Word of God, the man said: "I see it. It is as plain as falling off of a log." With this he was saved, and returned to his home and into the meeting that day to

take part in the work and testify to God's power to save sinners. I feel now, however, that I should not close this record of the above meeting without relating a circumstance which transpired during its progress. Two brothers, Minor and Charlie Wallace, were among the most prominent young men of the town, and had both been wicked, but they were now among the penitents. Minor was a lawyer and quite promising, but had felt impressed that if ever converted he would have to preach, and had on this account avoided religious influences; but in this meeting, as above stated, he had been convicted of sin and was earnestly seeking pardon. He came to Sister Sharman's, where I was stopping, came into my room upstairs to have me give him what instructions I could as to how to be saved, and while we were together he professed faith in Christ and became quite efficient as a worker in the meeting. His brother Charlie, however, had not yet been saved and became discouraged, seeing others were being saved, and so he came to the early meeting one morning and stood up and declared himself lost, saying that there was no salvation for him; that others might be saved, but he never; and stated furthermore that he would never be in another religious service and would never enter another church house. With this he turned toward the door, saying, "Good-by to everybody," and passed out. Several persons ejaculated: "Come back, Charlie. Don't do that." But on he went. I felt sure, however, that he would be back, as he was only in great distress because of sin, which caused him to do this; and sure enough he was back at the next service and was saved, and was afterwards a whole team for good. He had simply

reached a point of helpless desperation, and was the better prepared when he could see the way clearly to accept the Saviour.

My work finished here, a run of three hundred miles brought me home again, where a rest was enjoyed and preparation made for more work.

My next engagement was at Thayer, Mo., a thriving young town of two thousand population on the Kansas City, Memphis & Birmingham Railroad. Our Church is made up of some of the best element of the town. My home while there was with the family of Mr. Boyd, a successful merchant and banker of the place, and withal a loyal Methodist and devout Christian. My stay there was very pleasant. The meeting was good. Thirty odd were added to the Church. We held special services for the railroad men every day at noon at the roundhouse and street services at 5 P.M. each day after the meeting got started well, and all these meetings bore fruit. It became necessary for me to preach a sermon on baptism; and while I tried to preach the subject in the spirit of brotherly love, a woman got so mad she left the house, saying that she didn't want to go to heaven if I was going to be there; but after she had reached the steps at the church door she went into a nervous fit and had to be taken home on a cot. Her husband was sent for, but he did not come. He sent word that she would get over that all right. She had to be taken home by others. This all did not affect the meeting, however, Another instance was that of a young husband who remained for the after service and took his place among the penitents; but his young wife, who did not believe in our way of doing things, arose and, passing

down the aisle, beckoned to her husband, who went with her. On the following day his train (he was conductor on one of the local freights) ran over him and cut him to pieces, his body being scattered along for thirty steps. This young wife could take her husband out of our service because she didn't believe in our methods, but she couldn't stop the car wheels and she couldn't look on the mangled form of her dead husband. How foolishly some people can act! Many things might be recorded concerning this meeting, but I must desist.

The trip from Thayer to Memphis is over a very interesting route, or at least part of it, being along the course of Spring River, which is one of the most interesting streams the writer of these notes has ever seen. I was soon at home again and ready for a trip to Southern Mississippi.

CHAPTER LII.

Sanctification.

It was about the time I was stationed at Jonesboro, Ark., that Dr. Carradine, through the press, gave his wonderful experience at Carondelet Street Church, New Orleans, as to how he sought and obtained the blessing of "entire sanctification." I read his statements with wonder. True, I had read in our standards, in the course of study for young preachers, the chapters on sanctification apart from those on regeneration, and always subsequent in arrangement to those on regeneration. I had also noted in our hymnal that in Section VII., under the general head of "Christian Experience," we had in arrangement, first, a large number of hymns on regeneration, and then as many as forty-four on "entire sanctification, or perfect love." Then I had noticed that when we received a member into the Church we always exhorted the membership to do all they could to "perfect such one in love." And last, but not least, I with others was asked when admitted on trial into the traveling ministry if I expected to be made "perfect in love in this life," and if we were "groaning after it;" but all this had rather a vague meaning in it to my mind, as I had an idea that it would take a lifetime to have this accomplished in us. I believed in the "growth theory;" and hence Dr. Carradine's experience had a strange sound to me. I was impressed very forcibly with the clearness of his

statement when he said, "The experience was one of fire," but I could not understand all this. I heard it suggested by ministers too that Dr. Carradine had simply never been converted, and had just gotten a good case of religion; while others said he had been backslidden and was simply reclaimed. I thought either of these things a possibility, and that he had simply mistaken this for sanctification, and thus I passed the question. Soon after this, however, I was associated with a minister of the gospel who claimed this experience, and as I studied him there seemed much in his life worthy of emulation. His daily walk and godly conversation, as well as the joyfulness of his life, caused me to form new resolutions, even if they were not all kept or carried out. Still later, in the St. Louis Conference, I was thrown with that saintly minister, Rev. E. J. Rinkle, a German, and one whose life made me feel all the time like I wanted to reach out after something higher. I knew I had been converted years before that and had experienced many joyful seasons in the Christian life, but there seemed to be a richness about this brother's experience worthy to be desired. But these things passed with the days that brought them, except the recollections of them. Brother Rinkle had put into my hand some literature, which had an additional awakening influence on this subject. I thought I could begin to see something in this doctrine, which had been taught me in all our literature, intended for Christians in this life, and I thought it would be well to get the experience, if possible, by "attainment" or "obtainment," or in whatever way it might come, but that it was unwise and would appear egotistic and pharisaical to profess the

blessing. So the time passed until our District Conference at Lutesville, Mo. I was then serving a charge in the St. Louis Conference, when Dr. Carradine came down by invitation from our presiding elder to conduct the religious or devotional part of the Conference, which gave me an opportunity to see and hear this wonderful man, who was creating such a sensation in St. Louis and elsewhere, and my impression after seeing and hearing him was that "the half had never been told" of him and his work. His influence over men was simply amazing. Under his sermons ministers and people would press their way to the altar in great companies, seeking pardon for personal transgressions or the experience of sanctification, and many professed to have received these blessings. Among the number who professed sanctification were some of my personal friends in the ministry—men, too, in whom I had great confidence as Christians. Yet, with what instructions I had received on this subject, and all I had seen and heard, there was still a decided prejudice in my mind against making a public profession of this high and holy life. Hence I remained in the congregation and simply looked on while others were seeking the blessing. I felt that I had been saved already and had tried to live a clean life, and therefore it seemed that it would be a reflection on my past experience to go forward as a seeker again. I could not yet distinguish between pardon and purity. I had felt ofttimes that my experience was not altogether satisfactory; there seemed to be something lacking, and yet I could never tell just where the trouble lay. As the work at this meeting continued, and I looked into the bright, happy faces of those who had

sought and obtained the blessing, and realized that they must have something that I did not have, for the time at least, I finally went forward for prayer that I might obtain this "pearl of great price." As I knelt at the altar, amid the shouts of those who had obtained pardon for sins committed or who had claimed the blessing of sanctification, Dr. Carradine came to me himself and asked me if I wanted to be "sanctified." I told him I wanted all God had in store for me; that if he had anything better for me than I already had I wanted it. He then asked me if I felt that I was on the altar. I told him I thought I was. He then said: "Doesn't the Bible tell us the altar sanctifies the gift?" I replied that it did. He then said that if I was certain I was on the altar I should unreservedly "reckon myself sanctified," believe the work was done, and get up and profess the blessing. I told him I did not have the blessing; I felt no change. He replied: "Never mind the feeling. Just believe the work is done and declare it, and the witness will finally be given." Just here I was reminded that this was the very thing I had often told penitents who were seeking pardon, and hence I agreed to do this at once, but when the test came for me to get up and testify I faltered. But the question was presented anew and decision pressed upon me until I arose and testified to the blessing, and the brethren were rejoicing over my testimony. Something, however, made me feel that I was acting the hypocrite. I felt no change, and, in fact, felt worse than ever for having professed what I felt in my heart I did not have. I seemed never to have felt more thoroughly convinced that I was not sanctified than now, and was therefore relieved in a sense when the time

had passed and the people ceased to mention the matter to me. While I had been made to believe in the doctrine more thoroughly, still I was certain I did not yet have the experience. Soon after this, too, my faith was wonderfully shaken when I saw others who had professed the blessing, even in the above meeting, act very inconsistently and in a way I felt sure sanctified people could not and would not act. Still I saw in the lives of others what was beautiful and greatly to be desired, and so things continued with me for more than a year. Sometimes weeks would pass with but little thought on the subject on my part, and then again something would fall into my hands which would create a great hungering for this higher life, and my faith became stronger and yet stronger in the belief that there was such an experience as this to be obtained subsequent to regeneration, although I knew not how.

This was about my state of mind on the subject when Rev. Clarence W. Perkins, of the North Mississippi Conference (whom I claimed as one of my boys, as he had committed himself to the work of the gospel ministry under the influence of my own ministry while on the Black Hawk Circuit), came to my home at Memphis to accompany me to South Mississippi, where I was to conduct a meeting at Hattiesburg for Rev. H. D. Howell; and almost as soon as he had entered our house he said to me: "Brother Kilgore, what do you think about this second blessing idea of sanctification?" I told him I believed it. He replied that he didn't; that if he was born again he was born again, and didn't need anything more but to go on and keep growing as a Christian. I replied again that there might be something necessary, even after a

"birth;" that there was, in fact, a cleansing process after a birth, and there might also be a baptism after birth, although I had a very vague idea of all these things yet. But the argument thus continued, as this was the topic of conversation most of the time we were together until we had reached Hattiesburg and were engaged in the work there. I found Brother Howell also very deeply prejudiced against this movement, and hence but little was said in his home about it, as I did not wish to stir up any strife on this subject in our meeting there. It must be remembered that I was not yet in the experience myself, but was in a restless state of mind on the subject. Finally one day we had all been invited into a home for dinner, when the subject came up. Brother H. E. Partridge, presiding elder of the district, was present. He was in sympathy with the doctrine, but, like myself, was not in the experience. The debate was warm among us that day. Some were for and some against the doctrine as a second work of grace. When it was all over and we were returning to our room, I said to Brother Perkins: "Perkins, you know I do not claim the experience of sanctification." He said: "Yes, I know it." I told him I thought it wrong to fight the doctrine, however, unless one was certain he was right in doing so; that he might be found to be fighting against God. He then said that he supposed it was wrong. I then suggested that as such men as Drs. Palmore, Cobb, Boswell, Carradine, and Bishop Key, with hundreds of others of the best of men and women, claimed to enjoy this experience there might be something in it; that if a hundred good men and women should report the existence of a spring at a certain place, one who had never visited

the place to see had no right to deny its existence—to all of which he agreed. All this suggested new lines of thought to my own mind on the subject and increased my desire to "know more of the doctrine" and made me to hunger and thirst the more for the experience; and with increased desire I awoke on the following morning, when the question came to me as to why I might not claim this blessing so much desired, and with this thought I moved out into the new day. If there was anything unclean in my life or willfully wicked, I was not conscious of it. I had even parted company with the tobacco habit some time before this, and hence had no battle to fight on this line; and as I now fully accepted the doctrine and greatly desired the experience, I was not able to see why I might not "go up at once and possess the land." I read in Mark xi. 24, where our Saviour said: "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." With this promise in my mind I approached the morning service in the sanctuary; and without any intention of stressing this particular doctrine in the public service or ever having seen the doctrine in the lesson chosen, I announced the lesson concerning the blind man at Bethsaida for the morning hour. As I proceeded to explain the lesson I thought I saw in it, when Christ gave the second touch in restoring perfect sight, the suggestion at least of this very thing I had been thinking about so much; and grasping the thought, I then and there claimed the blessing of perfect love, and my soul was filled and flooded with a sweet rest and peace I had never known before. I had often received great blessings, but they were never satisfying, always left me hungering for

more. It seemed that I was always drinking and yet ever dry; but this blessing obtained through faith on this memorable morning, unlike all these other blessings mentioned, gave me a divine fullness which was abiding, and this brought with it a flood of light on various passages of Scripture I had never seen before. Indeed, the Bible seemed a new book. There was also great joy in my soul, for the kingdom of God is not only "righteousness and peace, but joy in the Holy Ghost." I did not conclude the sermon that day in the way I had intended, but came down at once and made a proposition to the Church. I never could tell just how I left the pulpit, but found myself down in the altar rejoicing and exhorting the Church. Many came forward and shook hands with me, and Brother Perkins threw his arms around me, saying: "There is something in this." And he returned to his home teaching this glorious doctrine. The meeting at Hattiesburg was attended with other good results. When I began the work Brother Howell said that he had a Church there with a membership of two hundred and twenty, but that if twenty of them claimed to be in the enjoyment of religion he was not informed of it, and he seemed to deplore the condition of things very much indeed; but when the meeting was over many were rejoicing in the experience of salvation, and some were hungering and thirsting for the higher life. From the beginning of the work here there was a little sanctified Baptist ticket agent, whose shining face and clear testimonies had helped us much and who now seemed very happy in the results of the work done.

My return trip home was via New Orleans, where I spent a day pleasantly taking in the city, and then

with an all-night run over the Illinois Central Railroad I was at home again. More will be written as to the above experience and its results in future chapters as things develop. Suffice it to say here that, like things in the vegetable kingdom, this experience must be cultivated in order to grow.

CHAPTER LIII.

Work in Tennessee.

The time was now up for our meeting at Rives, Tenn., as arranged for by Frank Dickey, of Chico, Tex., six months ago. It will be remembered that he gave me money to pay my railroad fare, feeling impressed, as he said he did, that if I could go to Rives and hold a meeting his aged father, who had been very wicked, would be converted. Rev. Thomas O. Owen, a graduate of Hendrix College, had been engaged to lead in the service of song, and we were soon on the ground for the conflict. Rives is a small town at the crossing of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad and the Newport News and Mississippi Valley Railroad, and is made up of the very best class of people. Our stay while there was at the charming home of Mr. Gardner, and never were two preachers more hospitably entertained than were Brother Owen and myself at this place; nor did a home ever seem more completely filled with sunshine than this one. There is nothing more beautiful this side of heaven or more to be desired than a well-regulated Christian home, nor is anything more to be dreaded than one where there is constant contention and evident hate. It has been my lot to be brought in contact with both kinds. This Tennessee home was preëminently one of the kind first mentioned; therefore to say our stay here was made pleasant would be unnecessary. There are some homes where one of

God's servants is welcomed always, while there are others where it seems to be a great tax to entertain one at all, and when done must be reckoned as among the charities bestowed and talked of in this light for many months to follow.

The meeting at Rives moved off encouragingly from the beginning, and by the middle of the first week the interest was very good. It was at about this stage of the meeting that I met Mr. Dickey (the old gentleman) on the street, and was introduced to him. He had not attended our services any yet, nor had he ever received the slightest intimation of what had happened in Texas concerning him or the design of our mission there, as arranged by his son; but special prayers had been offered for him daily for six months at least. After some little conversation with him and when we were ready to part, I invited him out to the meeting; but he did not promise me to come, and treated the matter rather gruffly. However, on the following day he was out at the service with his wife. By this time the interest was fine, and at the close of the sermon and while penitents were being invited I walked down the aisle and into the pew where Mr. Dickey was seated, and said to him: "Mr. Dickey, six months ago, six hundred miles from here, your son Frank gave me money to pay my railroad fare to Rives and return, stating that he had an aged father here unsaved, and that he expected to pray for you every day from that time until this meeting is over, that you may be saved." With this I turned and walked back to the altar. I did not give him time to make any reply, but left him to think about what had been said, the message I had brought to him. By the time I had reached the altar and turned

to face the audience again he was just making his escape from the door. After the congregation had been dismissed, some one remarked to me that he was afraid "old man Dickey would never come back again," to which I replied: "Yes, he will." I felt sure that the Lord was directing this whole movement, and that I had simply been guided in what I had just done by the Holy Spirit; hence it must bear fruit.

Sure enough, next day our old friend was back; and when an opportunity was given for penitents to come forward for prayers, I saw Mr. Dickey start down the aisle toward the altar, and was greatly rejoiced at the thought that he was coming as a seeker; but, to my great and agreeable surprise, when he had reached the front he began to shake hands with the Christian people and to rejoice—already converted. As a matter of course there was great rejoicing among the Christian people over this great victory. Mr. Dickey testified that day that on the preceding day when I approached him as I did he was so shocked on hearing what his son in Texas had done that he got up and left the house and walked home, a distance of a half mile, through a wooded part of the suburbs, having forgotten for the time that he had left his wife and horse and buggy at the church until he had reached the wood pile at his own gate, and that he could not dismiss the thing at all from his mind until he had made a surrender of himself to Christ. I had promised to dine at his home on that very day, and as we were all walking together on the way to his house he stopped on the way and said: "I'll tell you, gentlemen, where this thing started. Six months ago, six hundred miles from here, my son Frank put it in mo-

tion, and to my own astonishment I have to-day united with the Church." He had given his name for membership in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. When we had reached his house and his conversion had been made known to his wife, who had remained at home to prepare dinner, there was another time of rejoicing. In the meantime some friend had gone to the telegraph office and wired Brother Frank Dickey that his father was saved and had joined the Church. I had told the congregation what Brother Frank had done, and hence the message was sent. John Dickey, the brother referred to in a former chapter, was also converted and united with the Church with his father. It will be easy to imagine what the effect of such a thing as the above would be on a community. The interest in the meeting was, of course, very much increased, and its influence extended.

About this time another striking incident occurred. I had been led to feel an interest in Mr. Jim Bush, son of Dr. Bush, of that place; so at the morning service one day I made mention of the interest I felt in the young man, asked the Christian people to join me in prayer for him, and suggested that we continue our prayers until he was saved or dead, thinking in this way to get the burden on the hearts of the people more perfectly. At this Sister Lanier, our pastor's wife, said: "Why can't we pray that he may be saved to-day?" My faith could not grasp this suggestion fully, although I was anxious to see it accomplished. But Brother McClesky, pastor of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, then spoke out, saying to Sister Lanier, "I'll join you in this;" and thus they covenanted together to pray that our friend Jim

Bush might be saved that day. When I remembered the Saviour's promise in Matthew xviii. 19, where he said, "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven," my faith was inspired to believe this could be done, and I joined them in the prayer. On my way to our dining place that day I met Mr. Bush and told him we were praying for him. I remembered how when Jesus prayed for his friend he went and told him about it, and I thought this example entirely worthy of emulation on the part of those who would follow "in his steps." He received my words kindly and seemed to greatly appreciate the interest thus manifested in him, and sure enough that night he was saved and joined the Methodist Church. Sister Lanier and "Uncle Joe" McClesky (that was what they called the Cumberland Presbyterian preacher) were comforted in witnessing the direct answer to their prayers in fulfillment of Christ's promise.

This meeting became one of the greatest of the season, and reached into the country several miles around until a large number had been brought into the kingdom. Brother Owen had done us fine work in leading the choir, and as a young man himself had wielded a fine influence over the young men of the community where the meeting was being held. The Churches of the town were all greatly built up, and the spirit of "brotherly love" prevailed. Arrangements were made with Brother Lanier for another meeting in his charge at Troy, Tenn. I was then off for home to rest a few days before filling an engagement with Rev. Rufus C. Morehead at Searcy, Ark.

Searcy is a beautiful town of four thousand inhabitants, and is an educational center, being the seat of Galloway College for Girls and Searcy College for Boys, as well as a Presbyterian Institute and fine public schools. It is also a health resort, as there are some fine mineral springs in the heart of the town. Our meeting there started off well. The music was excellent, being led by Brother Owen and a well-organized choir. The pastor himself was a fine singer. We instituted an afternoon service for young ladies where the girls who were already in the Church could be trained as workers, and before the meeting had closed I saw twenty-two of these same young ladies kneel together and lead in short voluntary prayers in the presence of a large congregation. Rev. Horace Jewell was present, and afterwards stated that he never expected to live to witness a prettier sight in this world than this was, according to his way of thinking.

A goodly number were added to the Church during the meeting, and we seemed to be on the borders of a great work, as some of the leading men of the town had been reached and were at the altar as penitents, when the meeting had to close. I had been appointed by Bishop Duncan to serve on a committee of investigation touching the character of a member of the St. Louis Conference, and had to go to that city, where the investigation was held in Centenary Church, which investigation occupied three days. The other brethren, Morehead and Owen, had engagements elsewhere; so the work at Searcy had to be suspended, but not before great good had been accomplished.

It was on Sunday morning at this meeting that I

preached a sermon touching the doctrine of Christian perfection, the first time I had tried to preach a sermon on this special line since my experience at Hattiesburg, Miss., already recorded in a former chapter of this volume, and God gave his approval of the sermon by blessing it in a very special way. At the close of the sermon Rev. G. A. Dannelly, an aged and honored member of the White River Conference, arose and said he thanked God publicly that he had received a blessing that day he had been seeking for more than forty years; he said the people could call it "sanctification" if they chose to do so, that he was not particular as to the name they might give it, but he was sure he had the blessing. This probably ought to have encouraged me to be more outspoken on this great doctrine; but I had resolved to simply go on and try to live the life and enjoy the experience in a quiet way, not yet realizing that if the great blessing were not used and testified to it would, like the grace of salvation itself, finally wither and become entirely fruitless. Failing to preach the doctrine and testify to the experience, I, as a natural sequence, failed to accumulate further knowledge on this line or grow in the experience, and hence soon cowered in the presence of opposition and virtually denied the whole thing, and at once lost the joy, lost the experience, and went for months and months with the same spirit of hungering and thirsting I had formerly had—and that, too, after having enjoyed this sweet peace in an unbroken chain during several weeks. I knew now what it was to be in the enjoyment of this sweet experience of perfect love, and had been in possession of this long enough to realize that it could be kept if used, but had suffered the

old enemy to swindle me out of this, and was thereby put at a disadvantage and greatly hindered in my work, having in a measure at least lost the power. One should profit by such experience and avoid similar mistakes ever afterwards; but the old enemy is ever looking for an opportunity to trip us again. May the Lord help us to watch unto prayer, that we may have courage to do the right thing always!

After this I went to Fordyce, Ark., where a fine meeting was started; but I was called home to the bedside of a sick child. However, as the child was soon all right, I went on to Dresden, Tenn., to fill my next engagement; while our pastor at Fordyce continued his meeting and scored a great victory for Christ.

The meeting at Dresden gave good promise at times, but the circuit court convened just as we had gotten the work well in hand, with some exciting criminal cases, thus detracting from the interest of our work; then a circus came and brought to the town a multitude of people who were not influenced by the meeting. Thus things became demoralized, and the meeting closed without accomplishing the results we had desired. Still some good was done.

I next went to Troy to fill the engagement made with Brother Lanier. Brother Owen had not been with me since the close of the work at Searcy, and was not with me any more this year. But we had a gracious meeting at Troy. Twenty-five united with our Church, which was very weak up to this time. A shadow was thrown over the community in the midst of the meeting by the untimely death of Mr. Compton. A home had been provided for me at Mr. Compton's, which was a delightful place to stay,

as they had a very nice home. There were only the two old people; hence it was quiet and a good place for rest and study. But Mr. Compton had suffered some reverses in his time. In the first place, he had been in a serious railroad wreck, and was badly crippled. Then he had lost his only son by death when he was just grown; and finally he had lost all he had in a commercial failure. So he was quite despondent, and had already acted in a way to give his friends some uneasiness. One morning after appearing really cheerful at the breakfast table, where we had remained some time and chatted after eating, he went to town, took a bath, got shaved, and purchased some potatoes, instructing the man who would deliver them at his house to put them in the wood house. Then he went home while his wife was at church, dressed in the suit he had evidently provided for the long journey, went into the wood house, and hanged himself. When the man who went to deliver the potatoes opened the wood house door, there was Mr. Compton dangling to the rope dead. The sad news soon reached every part of the town. I was called on to preach his funeral, which I did to a large concourse of people. Of course I could say nothing either to benefit the dead or comfort the living, but could only speak words of warning to others who were unsaved. The remains were taken to some place in the East for interment, and I was given another home for the remainder of the meeting.

As already recorded, the meeting itself resulted well, and at its close Brother Lanier stated that some one had asked him when the work was being announced what he wanted with a meeting there, as we had but

little to build to, and he had replied that he wanted it for himself if no one else could be benefited. But after twenty-five names had been added to the roll of membership and the Church greatly revived, he put his arm around my shoulder as he wept and thanked God for the work of grace and expressed a hope that we would meet again here; but if not here, then we must meet in heaven. Just two weeks from that time I had a letter from his sweet daughter, stating that her father had gone to his home in heaven. I hope so to finish my life here as to meet him there.

The meeting over, after a brief rest again, I was in another meeting at Mammoth Springs, Ark., with Rev. S. L. Cochran. This was the fourth time I had assisted Brother Cochran in a revival, and at this last one the Lord gave us a victory, as he had done at the other times and places. Here fully a hundred professed conversion and sixty odd joined the Methodist Church. It was simply glorious! It was at this place that I first saw a great "fishery," and it is really interesting to see how this business is managed. This was the last meeting before Conference, except a brief one at Corning, Ark., where the people had been without a pastor for some time and wanted some preaching done to get them in readiness for the new year. Twelve or fifteen persons were added to our Church, however, during the few days I was there, and I hope other good was accomplished.

The St. Louis Conference held its session at West Plains, Mo., and I transferred back to the White River Conference.

CHAPTER LIV.

Conference at Jonesboro.

As has already been noted, I transferred back to the White River Conference. It may doubtless be remembered that I had sustained a supernumerary relation to the St. Louis Conference during the past year; but Brothers Cochran, Smith, Jernigan, and others had suggested to me that if I would transfer back to the White River Conference they would try to get the Conference Sunday school agency for me, which would put me in the field and at the same time give me connection with the Conference under appointment. This would have pleased me very much. But the first day of the session of the Conference, when the first name was called, the matter was decided in my own mind that I could not be given this place, as Brother Dannelly, an honored member of the body, who had held this place during the preceding year, expressed a desire in open Conference to be reappointed to that work if agreeable to the Bishop and his advisers. I would not if I could have put myself in the way of this dear good man, whom I already loved as a father, and hence decided at once that my name should not go before the Cabinet for this place; and as there seemed to be nothing else open that would turn me loose in the field, I decided then and there to ask the Conference for a location, and turned my transfer paper over to a presiding elder with this instruc-

tion. I listened for my name to be called, when a location would be asked for me by the elder. But time passed on until Friday afternoon, when, just as I had gotten a seat in the church to hear a sermon by Rev. J. R. Moore, of the Little Rock Conference, some one touched me and said that the Bishop had sent for me and that a brother was waiting at the door for me. When I reached the door, I found one of the elders, Rev. F. A. Jeffett, waiting, who informed me that Bishop Keener wanted to see me in his own room, and that he didn't think the Bishop was going to give me a local relation, to which I replied: "O yes; I think he will when he understands me." But when I found the Bishop and his Cabinet in session I told the Bishop I preferred to see him privately, as I felt that I could make him understand me better. With this we went into his private apartments, and I told him the whole case—that my wife was an invalid and did not feel able to take the responsibilities of a pastor's wife, that we had obligations to meet which I thought best to try to meet otherwise than in the regular work, and therefore I had asked to be located. The Bishop then said: "Well, what do you expect to do?" I told him I thought I could help the brethren in their revival work as far as able, when he replied: "Ah, I thought so! I am not going to give you a location. This running about must be stopped. I'll give you an appointment, and a good one, but I'll not give you a location." I confess that I was so surprised and shocked at the position he had taken that I hardly knew what reply to make to this, but finally told him I thought a man could get out as he had come in if there were no charges against him and his case was clear. But he said again that he

would not give me a location, and asked me where I lived. I told him at Memphis. He then said he could give me a charge near Memphis. I had already told him that if I must take an appointment he would have to give me one that would support me, as I had obligations to meet and an afflicted family to support, and he had assured me that he would do this. After I had left his room I remembered what he had said about giving me an appointment near Memphis; and knowing the territory as well as I did, I knew there was nothing near Memphis that could possibly give a support to my family, as there was but one charge near Memphis, and this had no home for the preacher, no parsonage, and paid only a very small salary, about sufficient for a young man without a family. So I made a second visit to the Bishop's room to tell him that we did not have to remain in Memphis, that we had no property there but were simply renting, that rents were high, and that we could go anywhere in the Conference we might be appointed. He said he was glad I told him this, that it was important; and with this I left him. I was not posted as to the prerogative of a Bishop in the matter of granting or withholding a location; but when I examined the law in the case, I found that the Bishop's only part in the matter is to take the vote of the Conference, and that a preacher is disposed of in the same way he has been received into the traveling connection—by vote of the Conference. So I was advised by some to press my case and ask for location anyhow if I still wanted it; while others among my best friends advised me to let the Bishop appoint me, saying that arrangements could be made after the session to secure some help on the appointed charge, and

I could go ahead and do a good deal of outside work anyway if I chose to do so. This I decided to do. My presiding elder had gone to the Bishop in the meantime and asked him what would be done in case I should persist in asking for a location, and his reply was that he would not give me a certificate of location, and would make me appeal to the General Conference against his ruling; and as I did not wish to be made so conspicuous before the whole Church, I decided as above indicated. Whether I made a mistake at this point or not will remain for eternity to reveal. My own judgment, however, is that things took the right turn, as the results seem to indicate. I had about made up my mind, however, to get up and ask the location anyway on Monday morning, let the Conference vote on it, and take the consequences, whatever they might be; but to my surprise the Bishop wound up the work and read out the appointments on Sunday night, and read my name out to the Marion Circuit, which was the charge already mentioned as being near Memphis—altogether in the bottom in the overflowed district, with not a decent house of worship on it, without a parsonage, with a very small salary, and no hope of much development if any that year, as there had been a terrible failure in crops in that section the preceding year. I had been to Marion and held a meeting for Brother T. B. Williamson the year before, and hence knew the people and loved them; but I knew they could not support my family under the circumstances, and was therefore at a great loss to know what to do. I wanted to be a loyal son of Methodism, as I had always tried to be. I loved my Church and her ministry, had always loved to honor our chief pastors,

and had felt specially drawn to Bishop Keener, as I had always felt that he was my personal friend, and did not now believe that there was any design in all this to afflict me personally; hence I was at a loss to know how to take this and what to do. The future will fully explain the Bishop's action in the matter, and that he did not intend to inflict any punishment on me for any personal reasons; but all this did not relieve the situation now.

This session of the Conference had been held, as may be remembered, in one of my former pastoral charges (Jonesboro), where I had a great number of personal friends. Many of them seemed very indignant at the way they felt that I had been treated, and the almost universal advice to me was not to accept the charge given me, but simply go on and work as I had planned to do; and this advice came from many of the preachers as well as the people. The Bishop had said in his remarks before reading out the appointments: "Now, if any brother is not pleased with his appointment let him report to me, and I will get me another man for the work and attend to his case at the next Conference. If the preacher fails to do this, he will be expected to serve the charge to which he has been appointed." So with all this and with the advice of friends, I had decided by morning to surrender the charge, and let the Bishop get him another man, as he had suggested. So I found my presiding elder early next morning and so informed him, and asked him to bear the message to the Bishop. In the meantime, when it was known that I was disturbed about my appointment, an exchange had been offered to the Bishop for me, offering the Boydsville Circuit

for Marion, which was but little if any better. When the elder informed the Bishop of my decision, he inquired for me again until he found me, and asked me if it was true that I was not going to serve the work to which I had been appointed. I told him I didn't see how I could. He then asked me if I was not going to accept either of the appointments offered, referring to the exchange suggested. I again replied that I did not see how I could, as there was not a support in either of them, and that I had told him fully of my financial condition as well as the condition of my family before he appointed me, and that I could not in justice to myself or my family or the cause serve where there was not a support, to which he replied: "All right, I will get another man for the work and attend to your case at the next Conference." And with this we parted. The presiding elder saw him afterwards, and asked him what provision he was going to make for Marion Circuit. He replied that he was not going to make any; that I would be all right after I had time to reflect a little and would go and serve the charge. So as to be on the safe side, as I knew there would be a future to all this, I went to the charge and called a meeting of the official board, had them make the assessment, and inquired otherwise into the condition of the charge. When I had gotten all these things together, I sat down and wrote Bishop Keener a long letter, giving him all the particulars, and asked him to transfer me to any other Conference in the Church if he chose to do so and could give me a work that would support me. I waited ten days for an answer, but it did not come. I then made another visit to Jonesboro, talked with the presiding elder, Rev. Frank Ritter, and

left the charge in his hands. He soon secured a young man without a family to take the work, and I proceeded to make engagements with the brethren in their meetings where there were open doors, and take what might be in store for me at the next session of the Conference. I had been assured, however, by my presiding elder that if I would state my case fully at the Conference they would vote me a location if I should still desire it or give me a work if I should prefer that; and so the case passed with the full sympathy of my friends at Jonesboro and elsewhere.

Many things here now hard to be understood will be made plain in connection with the record of the next Annual Conference. My first meeting following the above decision was in the city of St. Louis, and its results will be recorded in the next chapter, as well as the results of other meetings and work. I continued to reside in Memphis for another year, where I could have easy access to all points as well as other conveniences.

CHAPTER LV.

St. Louis and Elsewhere.

When the question was all settled as to my appointment from the Jonesboro Conference, I arranged at once to go to St. Louis in response to an invitation from Dr. C. L. Smith to conduct a meeting for him in his charge at St. Paul Church, which lasted four weeks. Brother Owen was with me again as chorister, and did noble work. Dr. Smith had planned well for his meeting, and hence there were signs of success from the beginning; but none of us had scarcely imagined that the victory would even approximate what it did. Two hundred and sixty-six were converted at the altar—and that, too, in connection with the main body of the services, as it seemed never to be necessary to announce an after service for inquirers. Nearly all the converts joined the Methodist Church before the meeting had closed. It was simply glorious! Everything seemed to conspire to help us.

There were three other revival meetings in session in the city at the same time: Dr. Hammond, the "children's evangelist," was there conducting a series of services in the "People's Church," down in the city; while Murton Smith, from Chicago, was holding forth at the Second Presbyterian Church, and Miss Sallie Smith, the "railroad evangelist," was working successfully among the railroad people. The great "dailies" took up the work and gave us extended reports every

morning through their columns, which greatly aided in the good work.

As ours was the only Methodist meeting in progress in the city just at this time, we were favored with frequent visits by Christian workers from different parts of the city representing other congregations, and thus it seemed that Providence was in our favor all the way through. Weekly reports of the great work were also sent to the preachers' meeting on Monday mornings; and in this way, as well as by special notice, the work was reported through the *St. Louis Christian Advocate.* Thus the meeting got an abundance of advertising, which was all helpful in scoring this great victory for Christ and his cause. The writer has been associated with hundreds of pastors, but I am absolutely certain that Dr. Smith is the most systematic and at the same time successful pastor I have ever known. Many things could be written of him and his work. The above meeting was historic in every sense of the word, and it opened a large number of doors to us in other places for revival work.

We accepted an invitation to Commerce, Mo., when the above work had ended, and went direct from St. Louis to this place. Plans had been made by the pastor of the M. E. Church of East St. Louis, Ill., for us to go there from Dr. Smith's church; but we had already engaged to go to Commerce, and hence could not accept this invitation, as we would have been glad to have done, in order that we might have in this way contributed a small share at least in cultivating an extended fraternity between the two great wings of our Methodism. We could not break our engagement, however, and therefore went on to Commerce, where

there was another decided victory in store for us. Commerce is a "river town," and, like all other towns along the river, was considered tough, and I suppose was so, judging from the large number of grown people and even old people we found out of the Church there. But we went to work with a will, and success soon crowned our efforts. Brother Owen was still with me, and his influence among the young people contributed in a large degree to the success of our meetings at different places, as he was such a model young man as well as Christian. Our home at Commerce was again very pleasant. The homes of the people of the town were thrown open to us in general, and the hospitality was large. Rev. E. J. Rinkle, the sanctified German preacher, was in charge of our Church, and had a fine hold on his people. We adopted the cottage prayer meeting plan at this place; but these afternoon services soon assumed such proportions that we were compelled to move them to the church in order to find sufficient room for the large numbers who wanted to attend, and we then had the three full services at the church daily. The fact of having to move this additional service to the church itself gave character to the meeting, and created increased interest until the town was moved and people at different ages were being saved.

A thing transpired here, however, which probably did more to create an early interest in the meeting than any other one thing. I preached a sermon on "Brotherly Love;" and while there were but comparatively few out to hear me, the manager of the River Warehouse, who was quite prominent in the town, and who was himself a sinner—that is, he was not con-

nected with any Church and had never made any pretensions to religion—was among the number present that day, and he seemed so impressed with the sermon that he sent me word if I would repeat it he would do what he could to get as many of the citizens of the town out to hear me as possible. Of course I saw that this would be a good advertisement for our meeting as well as the good that might be accomplished directly by the sermon, and I consented to do this and so announced. When the hour came, the house was crowded to overflowing. The Lord gave me great freedom in the delivery of the message, and a gracious good service followed, after which we had the attention of the town drawn to the meeting, and the work increased.

About this time Judge Barentine, who had served as circuit judge in Southeast Missouri a number of years, and who had been a noted skeptic and sinner, arose in a testimony meeting one morning and asked the privilege to talk. As he had made himself noted by his opposition to all religious sentiment, there were mingled feelings of curiosity and fear and evident suspense to know just what the old sinner would have to say in a religious meeting. His wife was a Christian woman, but had been greatly hindered in her religious experience by the life he had lived. He began his talk by saying that he had often seen a span of fine horses, brushed and sleek, and had admired them more than he could admire a beautiful steam engine or a grand steamer at sea; but he had also seen, on the other hand, a balky team, where one horse would try to pull the whole load, while the other would hold back, thus causing the faithful one to fail; and

he now drew from this a lesson. He said that he had been the balky horse, and while his wife had tried to be a Christian he had hindered her all he could and made it as hard for her as possible; but that from then on, by the help of God, he would not be the balky horse any longer, but intended to pull side by side with his Christian wife the remainder of the way. With this there was a rush to him on the part of Christians from different parts of the congregation, who came to shake his hand, and thus encourage him in this resolution as well as to rejoice over his return to God. They gave him a regular ovation. One could not help being reminded of the lesson of the returning prodigal as recorded in the New Testament.

It is not difficult to see that with such influences at work as those recorded above our meeting at Commerce grew to be great, so that many were saved and added to the Church. Whole families came into the Church together.

Our next meeting was at Batesville, Ark. About this time, however, Brother Owen was appointed to a pastoral charge to fill a place made vacant by the death of a minister, and our associations in the work were thus brought to an end.

I went to Batesville, where Rev. J. M. Hawley had charge. Brother Hawley was another graduate from Hendrix College, and a lovable character. The people of Batesville treated me very kindly in every sense of the word, and some strong friendships were formed which will last, I hope, while eternity endures. My home while there was one of the most pleasant, and the meeting was good all the way. The ingathering was probably not so large as at some other places;

still about forty joined the Church, and the meeting was otherwise quite successful.

It was on the second Sabbath of the meeting that a lady left her husband at home and came to the morning service. She tried to persuade him to come with her, but he would not, and didn't want her to come; but she came on anyway, leaving him reading a newspaper. When she returned, to her great surprise, she found him on his knees praying. He seemed greatly distressed on account of his condition; said he felt that he was lost; and as his troubles seemed to increase and he could not be comforted, the wife sent across the street for a neighbor who had already been converted during the meeting, thinking he could probably help her husband. We were holding three services daily; but that morning during the eleven o'clock hour the weather was so threatening that it looked as though we might be defeated in the afternoon, and to prevent this as much as possible I announced that we would hold services that afternoon, weather or no weather, if there was nothing worse on hand, unless there should be a cyclone, which of course I did not think was probable. When the hour for service came, there was an electric storm on, with a great rain; it was simply pouring down. But my word was out to hold service without regard to the weather, and if I did not go there would be a falsehood out; so I put on my wraps and rubbers, took my umbrella, and started out through the drenching rain. The distance was at least a quarter of a mile, and I could imagine that the people in the homes along the way would put me down as a fanatic or fool; but I must go, even if they did. When I reached the church I found a half dozen or

more boys who had turned in out of the rain, and they looked at one another and smiled as I entered the church and said: "Well, boys, we are here." I had hardly relieved myself of my extra wraps before the two gentlemen referred to above, the man so penitent and his converted neighbor, entered the door of the church, having also come through the rain. The convert had suggested to his friend that they come to the church and get the preacher to help him, when he replied that it was raining so hard there would be no service; but the young Christian said: "Yes; the preacher has announced that there will be service, 'weather or no weather,' and I suppose he meant it." So they came. The man came in weeping and praying aloud; but after we had talked with him and tried to point him to Christ we engaged in two or three prayers with him, and finally witnessed his conversion. He seemed entirely changed, and instead of weeping, as he had been doing, he began to rejoice and seemed very happy. By this time the rain had ceased, and others had come in to witness what had been done. As the man was well known in the town, the effect of his conversion and its influence on the meeting were quite favorable. The work went on until a good harvest was gathered into the garner of the Lord. So this rainy afternoon and my keeping my promise as announced, even at the risk of being called a fool, led to this man's conversion, and this in turn led to an extended victory. I have thought as to what the results might have been had I failed to fill the appointment at the church that afternoon and those two men had been disappointed when they came for help. We should profit by such experiences for future work. I

write these things that they may be helpful to others. The man mentioned above testified that he would have entered the church, if possible, if there had been a hundred men with bayonets before him to guard the door. How sore the disappointment and how sad the possible results if there had been no one there to meet him and help him! Thus we are frequently led through the greatest difficulties to accomplish the greatest possible results. But the heavier the cross, the brighter the crown always.

It must be understood that when these meetings were over from time to time I would spend a few days with the loved ones at home, which always came as among the chiefest joys of my life. No one loves his own more than does the writer of these sketches. They are as dear to me as the blood that flows through my veins; and if I did not feel that the Lord had called me into this work, I would a hundred times prefer to spend the remainder of my days with them, even in some quiet retreat. I realize that my best days on earth are passing, and to spend them away from home almost entirely would certainly be to assume privations which are not at all desirable. But the Lord has so abundantly set his seal on the work done so far as to have demonstrated very clearly his will in the matter, and made it clear that this call is from him and should be obeyed. "Where he leads" we should follow.

The next scene of action was at Wynne Junction, Ark., where the Lord gave another great victory. Ninety-seven were added to the Methodist Church in this meeting, and some united with other Churches as the result of the work. The beginning of this great success was in an afternoon meeting when a young

wife and mother came forward for prayer. She was the only penitent and was very happily converted almost by the time she had reached the altar; and as she had a good many friends there, there was great rejoicing over her conversion. Wynne Junction was at that time a new town, growing rapidly, and was said to have been already becoming noted for the wickedness of its people. Therefore the work accomplished was doubly important.

Among the large number of converts of this meeting were two brothers who were engaged in the livery business, and who said they could not conscientiously become members of the Church while interested in this particular line, as they would necessarily have to desecrate the Sabbath, and therefore they did not join with their comrades. Of course such a plea will not be sufficient when they come to meet the Judge. The livery business is a necessity, and I should be glad to see this, as well as other lines of activity, controlled by Christian people. It is only necessary for people engaged in public business to determine in the light of the New Testament teachings as to what class of work they can do in their line on the Sabbath and yet avoid its desecration, and then stick to this rule.

A hotel keeper once said to me that he wanted to be a Christian, but had to feed the people on Sundays, and therefore could not carry out the Christian's obligation. We would be greatly benefited as a people if all our public boarding houses were controlled by people who are strictly Christian in regard to all their conduct. A great deal of trouble would thus be avoided. I was once conducting a revival in a town where there was a large hotel where all sorts of rev-

elings were allowed, which rendered it more difficult for the Church to succeed. Some one remarked that he did wish that this hotel could change hands and be run by Christian people.

In another town the Church was prosperous and grace abounded on all sides, when a wicked woman who claimed membership in a Church came in and rented a popular hotel and soon threw the great dining hall open for card parties and dancing, and it was but a little while until the young people had been drawn off from their Churches and the whole town and community was demoralized. Truly, "one sinner destroyeth much good." Thus we see how it is important for anything that ought to exist at all to be in the hands of Christian men and women. They must determine how much of this can be done on the Sabbath, and then make all necessary arrangements for this holy day during the week preceding. To be sure, it will be necessary to do some things on the Sabbath, but we are only to avoid all unnecessary work. This is clearly our Saviour's teaching on the subject when he says: "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." One should decide what he can do and what he ought not to do, and then carry out these convictions even if it requires the loss of position. Better obey the voice of God and conscience than the voice of men.

Other things might be recorded of Wynne Junction and her people as well as of the great meeting held there, but I must pass on to make record of other things and places.

My next work was at Muskogee, Ind. T., where another victory awaited us after a hard-fought battle.

My invitation to this place was one of the results of the great revival at St. Louis. Rev. M. L. Butler was pastor of the Methodist Church here at the time, and in his fourth year in this charge. Brother Butler had been in the Conference twelve years, and this was his third pastoral charge. He always served out the full limit. Pretty good record!

Muskogee was at this time the educational center of the Indian Territory. The Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians all had institutions of learning here, our own school, Harrell Institute, being by no means the least of these. Rev. Theo. F. Brewer had charge of the school, and was in great favor with the student body as well as the whole people. The presiding elder, Brother Coppedge, also lived at Muskogee, besides one or two other traveling ministers whose fields of labor were elsewhere. With such a corps of preachers and a band of good workers besides to back us, it will not be astonishing when I say the success of the work was large. But, as already stated, this success was not achieved without a conflict. It looked for several days as if the battle would be lost; in fact, we were brought to the place in the meeting where we were reminded of Christ in the garden, when he "sweat as it were great drops of blood." There was also agony here; but then we are reminded that it is said that when Zion travaileth she bringeth forth sons and daughters to God. So we pressed the battle hard. I can never forget the experience; but victory came at last, and the work was great. It was truly one of the grandest triumphs of the year. One hundred and sixty-seven professed faith in Christ and more than a hundred were added to the membership of the Methodist Church. It

was truly good to be there. It was glorious! All denominations took part in the work, and brotherly love seemed to prevail. Judge McAlister, a Presbyterian, said one day during the meeting: "Brethren, I love you, and it makes me happy to love you." I suppose the Judge expressed the sentiment of the majority of the Christians present. Many of the students of Harrell Institute were among the converts, and I suppose every member of the factulty had been greatly blessed, as they were all in full sympathy with the work and were, in fact, among our best workers. And now, after years have come and gone, we want to praise God for this great victory.

In the early history of this meeting the writer of these notes was working among the people during the after service, and during prayer I was disturbed by a company of young people who were behaving very badly and evidently making sport of our work. When the prayer was over, I moved around in front of them and said, "Are you young people Christians?" to which they replied: "No." I told them that I knew they were not, and that if I could not behave myself in church I would stay at home. There were two young men and two girls in the company. I assured them furthermore that I did not mean to be unkind to them in the least, that I was their friend, but that they should respect our meeting; and with this I turned from them to help some others who were penitent. As soon as I had turned my back they began to behave worse than ever, when I went to them again and said: "Young ladies, I must tell you now that you and your companions must not disturb this meeting further. The law protects us in public wor-

ship, and we must now have order, or some one will be in trouble." When the service was over they were said to have gone away very mad, saying they would hear me no more. However, they were back the next night, and one of the young ladies was happily converted; the following night the other girl gave her heart to God, and later still one of the young men came in. On the following Sabbath, with a large number of others, they were received into the Church, and apologized to me for their behavior that night. One can never tell who will be saved.

CHAPTER LVI.

In Northern Missouri.

When the work was over at Muskogee I went direct to Marceline, Mo., in response to an invitation from Rev. Ward M. Baker. My route was via Kansas City and thence over the Santa Fe Railroad along the Missouri River, traversing one of the richest sections of country I have ever seen—fully equal to the Sacramento Valley in California or the Yazoo Delta in Mississippi. Carrollton, Mo., one of the educational centers of the State, was on this route.

Marceline is a flourishing town near the Iowa line, and is made up of a wealthy class of people; but the Church at the time of which I write was at a low ebb. Although it was in the month of May, the weather was very disagreeable; and our house of worship being located almost a mile out from town made it quite difficult for us to secure the attendance even of the membership of the Church. After a few days we succeeded in securing a large hall in town, and from then on had a large attendance and a good meeting. My stay here was very pleasant, as I was given a good home while in the meeting. I also attended the Macon District Conference at Brookfield while there, and met a goodly number of the preachers. As the work at Marceline had been crowned with a good degree of success, I was invited to a number of other places.

I accepted an invitation to Clarence, Mo., and after

a visit home and a few days spent with my family, I returned to Clarence to assist Dr. McAnally in a two weeks' meeting. I had found Brother Baker, of Marceline, and Presiding Elder Grimes very pleasant companions in the work, and felt sure Dr. McAnally would be equally so; and in this I was not disappointed. The work at Clarence was very pleasant; and while the visible results were not as large as at some other places, still we enjoyed a degree of success.

My trip home from Marceline and back to Clarence was via Hannibal, St. Louis, and Cairo, Ill., thus running along the Mississippi River a good portion of the way from Hannibal to Memphis, a distance of six hundred miles or more.

When the work at Clarence was over, I returned to Arkansas to conduct a meeting at Gurdon for Dr. E. N. Watson. One might suppose that with all these victories recorded there would be large compensation and one would soon become independent. In fact, there are those who think this special line of work is chosen because of the large amount of money there is in it; but there was never a greater mistake. True, we did sometimes strike a place where the people were more liberal than at others, but ordinarily there was not much beyond a decent living given at any place, while it was very often the case that traveling expenses seemed to be thought a proper compensation.

Just at this time I was passing a period of three months during which my railroad fare about covered the amount of reward from a temporal standpoint. I was once invited to a town to conduct a revival in company with my singer when we were put at the hotel to stay; and after three weeks' hard work we were left

to pay our own hotel bill. It frequently occurs, as in this case, that even after the work has been crowned with a measure of success the meeting closes in a storm of bad weather, which leaves no opportunity for taking a collection, and the workers are left with very little or no compensation.

When the three months alluded to above (when I was paid nothing for my work) were followed by some meetings where liberal contributions were made for the work, those who witnessed the amounts contributed (which were not extravagant themselves) might have supposed that this was always the case, when in fact such was rather the exception than the rule; so that the amount received during the run of a year (after traveling expenses are paid) would not amount to more than a good average salary in a pastoral charge—and this, too, after one has suffered the privations of being away from loved ones and at the same time having worked hard every day. If any one imagines that it is an easy task to conduct three services a day ranging from one and a half to two hours each, he is simply mistaken, and only needs to try it to learn the truth of this statement.

The meeting at Gurdon was good. A class of twenty odd was received into the Methodist Church, and some names were given for other Churches. My home while there was at the parsonage, and Brother and Sister Watson, with their accomplished daughter, entertained me very kindly. Sister Watson comforted me concerning my mother, who had been dead some time; but I had never felt reconciled to her death. I felt that she ought to have remained with us longer, and one day stated my feelings about it to Sister Watson, who

said in reply: "Brother Kilgore, was your mother a Christian?" I told her she certainly was, as it was said of her when she died: "She was the salt of the earth." Sister Watson then said: "You think she is gone to heaven then, of course?" I replied: "I certainly do." She then asked me if I would rob my mother of a single moment's peace and joy and rest in heaven; said that she had served her time here, and done this faithfully, and had now simply gone home where she could rest. I had never been able before to think of it just in this light; but I have ever since been perfectly reconciled to her death, and only want to live myself so that I may meet her again on the other side.

The work ended at Gurdon, I went home again, and this time to remain longer than usual, as we were now arranging to leave Memphis and move to Searcy, Ark. Of course there was the usual hurry and worry incident to a move of this kind; but it would not be profitable to the reader to have all this given in detail. The work was soon finished, and the household goods all packed and ready for shipment, and our private grips packed and ready for the trip. It was Saturday evening when the work was completed. My plan was to go to Searcy and spend the Sabbath with friends, and thus give Mrs. Kilgore and the children an opportunity to see their future home, and then take them on to the Indian Territory to spend the time with me allotted for the meeting at Wagoner, where I was to work next. While our goods were packed and ready for shipment, we did not move them from the building we had occupied, as we had a half month to go on before our rent time was out, and I was anxious for my family to go and look around before we moved.

There was an object in view in taking them to the Territory with me just at this particular time. Dr. Bailey, of Eufaula, Ind. T., who was converted in our meeting at Muskogee, had offered to give me a home at his place. He offered to build a nice new cottage on a good convenient lot and make me a deed to it if I would make Eufaula my home. While I was already in doubt myself as to whether or not it was the thing to do, still I wanted my wife to see the country and place and decide herself whether she would like to live there or not.

As already stated, it was Saturday evening, and our plan was to go as far as Searcy to spend the Sabbath; but, to our great disappointment and inconvenience, when we reached the Iron Mountain Railroad station, we were informed that the schedule had been changed that day and we were an hour late, which necessitated our going to a hotel and remaining in the city till next morning. As this was Sunday, we did not go to Searcy, as we had planned, but ran over to Wynne Junction and remained there until Monday morning, and then continued our trip to Wagoner without stopping off at Searcy, though one day was spent in Little Rock, as we did not make good connection there; and then, too, this gave my wife an opportunity to make some preparation for this extended trip which had been neglected at Memphis, owing to the abundance of other work necessary to be done; and besides this, it was pleasant for my family to take in part of the city of Little Rock, as this was their first visit there.

Leaving Little Rock, and after an all-night's run, we reached our destination early next morning, and were taken to the homes provided for us, where we

were as kindly cared for as the circumstances of the people would allow. Wife, baby, and I were entertained at the parsonage, and Brother and Sister Belcher were very kind to us. The other children had a pleasant home at the Brown House (hotel). The meeting started off well; but there came one of those proverbial Western hot winds, which rendered it so disagreeable to be in a house at all, especially where there was a crowd, that we could not influence many to attend. Still, we were there, the expense of the trip was heavy, and, as we hoped the hot wave would soon pass, we tried to continue the work under these unfavorable circumstances. No one can even imagine what one of those hot winds is until he has passed through one himself. To give the reader some idea, however, of the destructive effects of one, when we reached the Territory corn was in silk and tassel, and the prospects for a heavy yield of this as well as other products was very flattering indeed; but after five days of this hot wind, the fields looked as if they had been burned with fire. Everything was completely parched. During this time it was like breathing off of a hot stove; one couldn't get a good breath. There were no shade trees near the town. It is a prairie district, and the only shades in reach are the shelters in connection with the houses; hence it was necessary to remain indoors nearly all day. This and the evident moral influences of the country at the time settled the question as to our probable future there. Our stay there was ended when the meeting was over, except to stop off at Muskogee and spend a day and night with our good Brother Butler and his amiable wife and children.

Notwithstanding the above difficulties, the work at Wagoner resulted in some additions to the Church and good work in other respects. Bishop Hendrix called at the parsonage, spent an hour or two during our stay there, and seemed to feel a great interest in the work and an interest of course in the Territory in general. He spoke of the difficulties attending the work in the West, and observed that it had been said of Abraham that he proved himself a true Christian in that he moved West and yet held to his religion.

During the progress of the meeting at Wagoner we received an invitation to Chico, Tex., to conduct another revival for Rev. B. H. Bounds, under whose ministry wife and I were both converted when young in Mississippi, which fact led us to accept the invitation and spend nearly two months together in the Lone Star State. *En route* to Chico we found it necessary to make stops at Denison and Fort Worth, where the time was passed pleasantly.

The meeting at Chico did not prove successful along any line except in the matter of attendance. We preached to large crowds; but there was but little visible fruit. Of course some new friendships were formed and old ones renewed; but the work was not satisfactory. The condition of my health at the time probably militated against the meeting, so far as my part was concerned, as I was a victim of hay fever—fever all the time, and yet able to keep going. One who has ever had this will know what I mean. I attended every service, however, including the sunrise prayer service, except one, and there was an incident growing out of this particular service which was rather painfully amusing. I was probably feeling no worse than I had

felt for nearly a month; but as it was Sunday night, and a large audience was expected, I felt hardly able to meet the responsibility of the hour, and therefore excused myself and remained in my room.

We were stopping nearly a mile from the church. My wife went to church with the family, and the children also went. When they returned, wife told me that when the service was over she missed one of our little boys, and failed to find him, although she made a diligent search for him. This greatly disturbed me, and I could imagine him lost in the woods, as the church was located out in the edge of the town, and the woods were full of wolves and coyotes. Thinking he may have gone to sleep somewhere on the church grounds, I arose, dressed, and walked to the church through the sand, of which there was an abundance there; and, failing to find him, I was making the return trip to my stopping place, intrusting the safekeeping of my boy to the Lord until morning. As I was passing through a wooded place I heard an unearthly noise to my left, although it seemed to be in the air and some distance away. I took it to be some kind of a fowl or bird, and moved on, thinking no more of it until I heard it a second time. It seemed now to be behind me, and as I turned to look I saw the form of what seemed to be a large animal coming bounding toward me. By this time I had reached a lane with a high fence on each side, and hence could not turn either to the right or left. I am sure I will never feel more certain that my time has come than I did that night. I had no weapon of defense, nothing to protect myself with, and was sure that I would in a moment or two more be torn to pieces by some sort of a wild

beast—I knew not what. My only hope was to frighten the thing away, whatever it could be; and with this I turned and began to jump up and down as high as I could, and hollo as loud as I could, nearly frightened to death, when the thing of terror began to slow up and wag his tail, at which time I discovered that it was Brother Smith's big dog. He had evidently followed me, though unnoticed until this time. The relief that this brought me was greater than I can tell. In fact, I had already been wondering how I would get back to my room without being disturbed by him, as he was considered bad as a yard dog; so I was relieved of this dread also. I thought afterwards that possibly all this came to me as a sort of punishment for not having gone to church that night.

When I think how badly scared I was that night, and how large that dog looked at first, I am reminded of the story of the little boy who on seeing a shaggy dog one day ran in and told his mamma he had seen a lion. She told him he was mistaken; but when he insisted that he had, she rebuked him and told him he must go in the closet and ask the good Lord to forgive him for telling a story. When he came out, she asked him if he had made it all right with the Lord, to which he replied: "O yes; there was no trouble about that. The Lord said he thought the dog was a lion himself when he first saw it." So I consoled myself with the thought that most any one would have been scared at such a looking thing coming just at the time it did and under the circumstances that then surrounded me.

Probably if I had gone on the Lord would have strengthened me and helped me through the service, as he had often done under similar circumstances, and

some one might have been saved and the work have taken a deeper hold and been attended with larger results as the outgrowth of this particular service, and then I would have been saved all this trouble.

The boy had only gone to sleep in the wagon belonging to the family where he was stopping, and had been taken home that way.

When the work had ended at Chico, we went to Collin County to visit relatives, where I conducted a meeting of five days, and received into the Methodist Church forty-one persons, nearly all grown. The work would have been continued here and the results possibly have been much larger, but another denomination held a convention at the same (union) church, which had been previously appointed when nothing was known of our meeting, and hence when their time came we had to close. More fruit of union church houses.

Leaving my family with the relatives here, I made a trip to Searcy, Ark., to receive our household goods and place them, so my family could go home at will. The reason of this extra trip was, I had engaged to conduct another meeting in Collin County, at Blue Ridge, before leaving Texas; and yet it was necessary that our goods be looked after at once.

On my return from Searcy it was needful for me to change trains at Greenville, where, according to the regular schedule, I would make close connection; but when I reached Greenville the other train had been gone just twenty minutes, and so I was left to wait over twenty-four hours. This seemed quite unfortunate; but the sequel will show the contrary. Of course I would have to secure a place to spend the night, and

was therefore on the lookout for a hotel porter when a gentleman standing on the platform looked at me with the appearance of recognition, finally advanced a step or two toward me, and said: "Are you not from Mississippi?" When I replied that I was, he said: "Yes; and this is Rev. Kilgore." I then recognized him as my old friend, Howard Brame, from West Point, Miss., who was at the time himself keeping a boarding house at Greenville. He took me in his hack and carried me to his own place, where I was made to feel quite at home. Soon after reaching their home, while engaged in conversation, mention was made of Mrs. Dr. Ervin being in town assisting in religious meetings, and on inquiry I learned that it was Mrs. Dr. Ervin, of Mississippi, who was one of my former parishioners at Columbus, and for whom I had the profoundest respect as a Christian woman. I was soon informed that she would lecture to young Christians at the Baptist church that night, and of course began to make my plans to go and hear her, which I did. When I entered the church, I went to where she was seated and made myself known to her, as she had not yet gone to the front. She expressed herself as being quite glad to see me, and called on me to offer the opening prayer. I had told her I could not remain through, as I wanted to go to the Methodist church, where the presiding elder was to preach in connection with a week-day Quarterly Conference. I reached the Methodist church before they closed, and at the close made myself known to the elder, who introduced me to some others. On the following morning I was taking in the town, and as I was entering the courthouse I was met by a gentleman who

asked me if I was not a preacher; then he stated that he had met me the evening before at the church. This led to an extended conversation, at the conclusion of which he invited me to remain and preach for them on the following Sabbath, as their pastor was away from home on an extended trip for his health. I told him I could not do this, as I had an engagement to hold a meeting at Blue Ridge; but he suggested that the pastor at Blue Ridge could fill his own pulpit on Sunday and let me come in on Monday. I finally agreed to return and preach at Greenville if the pastor at Blue Ridge would excuse me; and with this continued my trip.

When I reached my brother's, where my family was stopping, a note was handed me from the preacher at Blue Ridge, Rev. J. H. Hunter, stating that he could not hold his meeting then, as there were difficulties in his way he knew not of when the arrangements were made. Thus I was left free to return to Greenville, and did so on the following day, accompanied by my family. In the meantime our pastor there had returned after an absence of two months; but he asked me to fill his pulpit at the evening hour, which I consented to do. He preached a fine sermon in the morning, which gave an inspiration to the service, and enabled me to preach with much more freedom. At the close of the sermon and while the pastor was making some announcements and other closing remarks some of the brethren came to me and aksed me if I could not remain and preach to them a few days, which I consented to do, as I had the time open allotted to Blue Ridge. After consulting their pastor, the announcement and plans for the work were made.

I have written all the above incidents in detail that I might show how God works through what seem to be the little things of life and even our disappointments to accomplish his will in us; and that these small things, such as that of the late train causing me to miss connection at Greenville by only twenty minutes, are sometimes the connecting links which bind us to greater events.

CHAPTER LVII.

The Greenville Meeting.

It was shown in the chapter preceding this how a succession of events led to my coming to Greenville just at the time of the pastor's return to the charge after an absence of several weeks. It was Rev. Dr. Carroll who had charge of the Church at the time, and a better man never breathed the breath of life. His return, of course, made it possible for me to hold the meeting to be described in this chapter, which proved in every way to be one of the greatest in the history of my ministry. It seemed that Divine Providence had planned the work in every particular, and I was only used as his willing agent to bring about the results. Elder Dixie Williams, of the Baptist Church, had just closed a meeting here, and had evidently done some good seed-sowing. Then this was being followed up by some good work by Mrs. Dr. Ervin, who was leading in some public meetings for the strengthening of the good impressions already made. Added to this the three resident pastors, Rev. Dr. Bone, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Rev. Dr. Anderson, of the Baptist Church, and Rev. Dr. Carroll, of our own Methodist Church, were working in perfect harmony, which itself was no small item, as they were constantly in their place and ready to do anything called on for the good of the meeting. "In union there is strength." Rev. Mr. Caldwell, the new Presbyterian pastor, was

also with us when in town, and gave us the benefit of his presence and what work he could do. Besides these, there was a band of ready lay workers in the Church, who seemed always ready to be appointed to any duty, and whose services were used of God in effecting decided results toward the general good accomplished. Mrs. Dr. Ervin was also still with us, and with her open Bible, with which she seems perfectly familiar, went into the homes of the people and into almost every place where a sinner might be found as far as her time and strength would admit. Her untiring zeal, always noteworthy, was never more so than on this occasion. Added to her other work, the results of which were visible on every hand, she made daily visits to the jail, where some good work was accomplished. She also enlisted others in this good work. Fortunately, too, the prisoners were in the hands of that stalwart Christian gentleman, J. F. Anderson, better known as "Amen Jim," of whom further mention will be made in these pages.

Early in the history of the meeting a prayer service was announced for men at the Cumberland Presbyterian church in the afternoon, while the Christian women would engage in a similar service at the Methodist church at the same hour. The meeting for men was almost a failure as to attendance, there being none present but the preachers and one or two others. Seeing this service would not be a success at the church, I asked for a hall or vacant room up in the business part of town, where the men we hoped to benefit might be reached. The Knights of Honor hall was offered, it being a very desirable place for the meetings in every particular. Seats were soon arranged for as many

as were supposed would be likely to attend; but when the appointed hour came for the service at this place the seats furnished were not nearly sufficient. The number of chairs was doubled for the next afternoon, the attendance had also greatly increased, and the interest in this service was great; so on the following day the hall was filled with seats, and these were soon all occupied. The hall was a large one, but it was not long before standing room was at a premium; and notwithstanding it was an "upper room," the people would gather in the street below in front of the building to hear the singing as well as the frequent shouts of praise. This service was held at five o'clock in the afternoon, being preceded by cottage prayer meetings in different parts of the city at an earlier hour. Sometimes there were as many as from five to seven of these earlier prayer services held at the same hour in different places led by different persons, and reports of these meetings with their results would be given at these five o'clock meetings, which would from time to time give new inspiration to the workers. It was not unfrequent that conversions were reported in connection with cottage meetings, and sometimes such as to give us great encouragement. One notable instance of this kind was that of a leading railroad engineer who was happily converted one afternoon in a service in his own home led by R. C. Dial. He came that night, together with his wife, and united with the Methodist Church, and has ever since been a faithful and useful member. Besides these various afternoon services, there were the regular morning and evening services at the Methodist church, which were largely attended, and where

the special work of trying to get people saved was pressed to the farthest possible extent, and where the harvest was reaped for all the Churches. Eternity alone can reveal the amount of good that was done or the number that were saved.

The work was truly great, as every class and condition of society was reached. Among the earlier converts in the meeting were some of the railroad boys, who later came forward and asked me to hold a service for them at 4 P.M., which I consented to do. Taking Sister Ervin and one or two others with me, I went to the roundhouse and held services; but as there was but little room provided, we could speak to but a few people. The next day, however, the boys said if we would come again they would arrange larger quarters for us, where as many could be accommodated as would come. Announcement for this service was soon made in the congregations at the church, and everybody was invited to attend. So on the following afternoon there were at least four hundred people, so estimated, at the roundhouse, and an interesting service was enjoyed. At the close this great throng of people marched in a body down Lee Street, the principal street in the city, singing as they went the song with the chorus: "We will walk through the streets of the city." Having passed on through the Public Square, they assembled at the hall for the five o'clock service. It would be hard to exaggerate the extent of the influence of this particular service. Thus the work spread and increased until every element in the town had been brought under its influence and scores, probably hundreds, had been saved. The meeting was historic, and is often talked of yet as

being the greatest religious wave that has ever visited Hunt County, Tex., as its influence seemed to extend to every corner of the county and beyond. Quite a number of ministers from other places were in attendance from time to time, and among these was Rev. E. H. Casey, of Sulphur Springs, Tex., who invited me to conduct a meeting in his charge when the above meeting was over. In the meantime my family had gone on to our new home at Searcy, Ark.; hence it was necessary for me to make a run home when the above work had ended to see that they were properly and comfortably arranged for. After a few days spent with them, I returned to Sulphur Springs to join Brother Casey in his meeting there.

We had at least one thing favorable to begin with at Sulphur Springs, and that was a beautiful new brick church, which Brother Casey had succeeded in having completed without debt, and which was dedicated by Bishop Hargrove during the meeting. He spent two or three days with us and took part in the work. The church is quite conveniently located, and hence the attendance was large in all the services. Brother Casey enjoyed the confidence of his people perfectly, which was another great help in the work. This meeting was good from the beginning, and resulted in about two hundred conversions and reclamations, and largely over a hundred additions to the Methodist Church.

After the winter months had passed, and while I was engaged in another very successful meeting in another Texas town, some designing parties circulated the report where I was at work that the work at Sulphur Springs did not stand—that not a trace of it could be

found. Only six months or less had elapsed since the meeting was held; and as the new church at Sulphur Springs had no heating arrangements yet, as they were planning to put in a furnace rather than stoves, I did not know but that great loss had been sustained, and I was troubled over it; but having an idea that this report was being circulated for effect, I stepped down to the telegraph office on Sunday morning, feeling as I did that it would be for the glory of God for the facts to be known, whatever they were, and wired Brother Casey to know what per cent of the converts of his meeting were holding out. His answer was, "At least ninety-five per cent"—and this, too, without knowing my purpose in making the inquiry. Even those who claim to be Christians often join with the devil in trying to defeat the work of the Church. I read Brother Casey's telegram at the opening of the morning service on that Sunday, and joined with the choir and congregation in singing the long-meter doxology.

While the work was in progress at Sulphur Springs the town was visited by two circuses—Ringling Brothers' and Sells Brothers'—just a week apart and coming in the order given. The Ringling Brothers and their company, one hundred and fourteen in number, took meals at the hotel where I was stopping. I found the Brothers to be pleasant gentlemen. They are sons of a Methodist minister, and two or three of them are members of the Church themselves. While the writer does not indorse circuses, yet I believe that this show comes as near being a decent one as it is possible for such a thing to be. They do not allow, as is customary, gambling on their grounds or in connection with their show in any way. This street parade was announced

for 10 A.M., which was the hour for our morning service in the meeting. Of course we made no change in the order of the services to fit the show, but went on with our work as usual. When we had gotten started off with the service, the bands with the show struck up their music for the parade. As our church was on a corner, the procession came down one street and up the other, making their turn at the church, thus giving us the full benefit of the occasion. When I discovered that my voice alone was not sufficient to compete with the bands and that some of our people were becoming quite restless to get to the door and see the parade, I suspended my talk and called for a song, stating at the same time that any who felt specially anxious to see the procession could do so; and while some went to the door and took in the parade, others of us joined in singing "How firm a foundation." As we closed the last stanza, having sung the entire hymn, the rear end of the procession was just moving away, and Brother R. C. Dial, of Greenville, who was present assisting in the work, observed that that was the first time he knew "How firm a foundation" was just as long as Ringling Brothers' show. While these circuses came and went, they did not, as might have been expected and as is usually the case, stop the progress of the meeting; but, on the contrary, the work went on without a break until the success was achieved as already recorded.

A circumstance was related in this meeting which I think worthy of note here. It was related by Brother Foscue, a wealthy banker of this place, as occurring in his own life. He stated that when he was much younger he was engaged in farming, and after a great rain, when the fences had been

washed away in the low places and the land was very soft where it had been plowed, he walked down toward his field and saw a horse grazing in one of the low places, where he didn't care to go to drive him out; and thinking the horse would damage the land by bogging about in it, he decided he would shoot at him and scare him, having his gun loaded only with shot; but when he fired, to his great surprise and sorrow, the horse fell down dead. On further examination, he found that it was his neighbor's horse, and a good one too. He said he never had the courage to go to his neighbor and make a clean statement of the whole affair, which would really have been a great relief; but, on the other hand, had kept it smothered up in his own bosom. One day, a year or more after the thing had happened, he was present where a number of men were engaged in conversation, his neighbor mentioned above being among them, who related the fact of having lost a good horse a year before, but could never tell what became of him. Foscue said he knew, of course, but still kept it to himself. Time rolled on until his neighbor had moved away, and things had changed generally, while he himself had accumulated good property and finally become president of a bank. He was sitting in front of his bank one day when a young man came up with whom he opened conversation, and found him to be a son of the man whose horse he had killed. He asked him about his father, and the young man informed him that his father was dead. Brother Foscue said he was sorry to hear that. He learned also that the mother was still living, and was blind. Without mentioning any of the above, he took the post office address of the blind widow;

and when the young man was gone, he went into his office and wrote a check for what he thought would be double the value of the horse, and sent it to her, stating the facts in his letter of advice as above related. After a few days had passed, he received an answer from her, stating that she knew nothing of the circumstance referred to, but supposed he knew what he was doing, and thanked him very kindly for the money, stating furthermore that she was very needy, and regarded this as coming from God, who in his mercy had remembered the widow in the time of want.

The work over at Sulphur Springs, I went home for a few days again, and then on to Prairie Grove, Ark., and held a meeting at Viny Grove, where a good work was accomplished—closing the work of the Conference year. While at Prairie Grove, which is in the extreme western part of Arkansas, I had the pleasure of visiting the home of Mrs. Dodson and family, old friends from Coffeeville, Miss.

From here I went to the session of the North Texas Conference to plan some work for the future with some brethren who had been writing to me with regard to meetings. The session of the Conference named was held at Bonham, Tex. It was at this Conference that I last met with Rev. J. Wesley Beville, who had served as chorister in some of my meetings in Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Missouri. Since this time I have lost sight of him entirely.

From Bonham *en route* home I stopped off at the session of the Little Rock Conference at Hot Springs and heard a great address by Dr. Alonzo Monk on "Education," as well as some other good things. Then I went to Memphis for a few days with the loved ones.

I next went to the session of the White River Conference to render an account of past events and take whatever might be in store for me. But of this I shall give the reader a full account in my next chapter. Praise the Lord for his great mercies during the past year!

CHAPTER LVIII.

Nebraska City and East Texas.

The reader of these pages will remember something of my defeated plans with reference to securing a location from the traveling ministry at the Jonesboro Conference a year ago, and how the Bishop seemed somewhat arbitrary as to the matter; but all this will be explained at the Conference at Helena, Ark., where I must account for not having served the charge to which I was appointed, Marion Circuit. Bishop Hendrix presided at Helena. As soon as the Conference was open for the minute business my name was called, and my presiding elder, Rev. Frank Ritter, stated that I had not served my charge, and that I was present and could speak for myself. When the Bishop called for my statement, I arose and related the whole story in brief, as it has been told in a former chapter of this book. The Bishop listened patiently to my report, and asked me kindly what I wanted. I told him that I wanted a location. He then asked me to retire from the Conference room until a vote could be taken on my case, as is customary in such cases. The Bishop then stated to the Conference that Bishop Keener had not intended to afflict me personally by refusing to locate me, that he was my friend, but that he (Bishop Keener) wanted to get the question of evangelists more prominently before the General Conference, and for this reason was hoping that I would take an appeal

to that body from his ruling. He said that as the White River Conference was the last for Bishop Keener before the General Conference would convene he thought this a good case and opportunity to carry his point; that Bishop Keener, he thought, really felt disappointed that I had not pressed my case and taken the appeal. After this statement was made the vote was taken, and I was given a location without a word on the Conference floor from any one and without an opposing vote, and thus the case was settled. Of course I had felt somewhat afflicted by the Bishop's proceedings the year before; but this had been no special hindrance to my work, as is evidenced by the results of the meetings at St. Louis and Commerce, Mo., Batesville, Ark., Muskogee, Ind. T., Greenville, Tex., and other places, as recorded in the preceding chapter.

Now that the question had been finally settled, I was left free to make engagements wherever there might be an open door. During the Conference at Helena, which was the shortest session on record, having convened on Wednesday and adjourned the following Friday, I received an invitation from Rev. W. D. Kelley, of Nebraska City, Nebr., to go there at once and conduct two meetings for him. This was so far north, and it winter time too, that I dreaded the trip; but my friend, Dr. John H. Dye, and others insisted that I should go, saying that it would probably give me a good send-off for the new year; and as there was no other door open just at the time for what might be termed the Christmas season, I wrote Brother Kelley I would come if I could. I still felt a little indefinite about it, and so wrote him. I went home, made

arrangements, and was soon off, but still hoping that something else would open up so I would have an excuse not to go. Indeed, I left home undecided whether I would try to go to Nebraska or somewhere else. I felt sure I could find places for meetings, but I prayed to the Lord very earnestly to lead me in the matter and to make my way plain before me. With this feeling, I went as far as St. Louis and stopped with friends three days, hoping something might possibly open up there for me, as I had received invitations during the past year from Kirkwood and Wagoner Place, and could not respond to them favorably; but now none of the brethren seemed ready for such a work. So it was still left for me to go on to Nebraska City.

Just here I had a rather novel as well as painful experience for the time. Leaving home in the undecided state of mind that I had, and forgetting that my railroad half-fare permits would all run out with the old year and hence the cost of the trip would be considerably greater, then spending as much time in St. Louis as I did, taking in Kirkwood, East St. Louis, and other suburbs, trying to pave the way for a meeting, thus incurring additional cost at every turn, I soon found my money supply exhausted, and I not yet halfway to the place of my destination. I did not have enough money to continue the trip or to return home. This was quite an unpleasant experience. I went, however, and stated the case to Dr. Stanley, a friend of mine in the city, and told him I would have to get some money either to go on or get back home on. He said he had none by him, but said that I had a friend at a certain number on a certain street who had money, and who he felt sure would be glad to help me. It

was a lady who had been in the meeting held in the city the year before. I did not even know her, but she remembered me; and when I called at her door she seemed very glad to see me. I soon told her my trouble, and she asked me how much help I needed. I told her, and she furnished me the amount. I told her I would return it when I reached my destination; but she insisted that I should never return it, saying that she had felt all the time that she had not given me as much as she ought for my work in her Church, and was only too glad to have this opportunity to relieve her conscience on the subject. Thus the Lord seemed to be helping me on my way and making it plain that I should continue the trip. Sometimes the way seems very dark, and it is hard for one to know what his duty is, and it had been so in this case. I continued the trip, however, and the Lord gave us a gracious meeting at Down's Chapel, near Nebraska City.

This Church includes our membership at Nebraska City and contiguous territory, and is a good Church. My home while there was at a Mr. Overton's, whose wife and daughter were devout Methodists. I shall never forget their great kindness to me while there. The weather was very cold part of the time, the temperature registering eighteen degrees below zero at one time, and that, too, with a strong northwest wind; but for all this, I was never more comfortably entertained in my life.

While there I went across the Missouri River into Iowa to visit Rev. M. N. Payne, who made such liberal gifts to various institutions of learning and also to other charities. He was evidently a great and good man. He was a local minister in our Southern Church,

and was greatly loved by all who knew him. That portion of Iowa where he lived was very rich and fertile, being along the Missouri River. My route from St. Louis to Nebraska City was through this fine section of Iowa via St. Joseph, Mo., and along the river to Nebraska City. I was impressed all along with the beauty and richness of the country; but the climate is too severe for an extreme Southerner. While in Brother Payne's home I witnessed an incident which will serve to give the reader a better idea of the richness of this man's liberality. A woman came to his door and called for him. When he responded, she spoke to him as though she knew him well, when he said to her: "Have I ever met you?" She replied, "No, Mr. Payne; you don't know me," and then stated that she lived at a certain place in the hill country, several miles away, and that she was trying to make a crop, but had no corn to feed her horse. She said her husband was living, but was an invalid, and she had to make the support for herself and him, and that she had come to see if he could tell her where she could get some corn; said she had some cedar posts and thought he might need them on his ranch in the West, and for them could let her have the corn she needed. He heard her story, then turned to his desk and wrote an order to his manager to let the lady have fifteen bushels of corn, or as much more as she could carry at a load, and handed her the note with instructions as to where to go for the corn. She then told him he could get the posts when he called for them. His reply was: "O no, keep your posts; you will need them for something else. You will owe me nothing for the corn." He then invited the woman into the

dining room, where she was given a good dinner, after which she went away with a grateful heart. His home was a single-story house, with an abundance of room, and was painted red; in fact, everything was painted red—fences, barn, outhouses, and all—and was known as the "red ranch." While he had rather a humble-looking home for one of his wealth, he evidently had a big outdoor heart.

Our other meeting was at Julian, Nebr., and was good; but I was called home before it was finished. I had spent a full month, however, on the trip, and had seen and heard many things new to me. I was then in the country where our Western meat supply comes from, and I saw herds of hogs ranging in number up into the hundreds, and saw the owners feed them corn by the wagonload. I also witnessed the process of packing ice from the river. The ice on the river was fourteen inches thick while I was there; it was taken from the river in fourteen-inch cubes. The process of packing was quite interesting to me, as it was taken with great facility from the river and placed in the cars above to be hauled away to the packing house; but I must not take time to explain all this here. While at Julian we had a snow that drifted seven feet deep. This, however, seemed to have no effect on the attendance at the meeting, as the people there do not seem to mind such things.

My return trip to Arkansas was over the Southern Pacific Railway via Leavenworth, Kans., and Kansas City. The snow described above was general, extending all the way home; but it was not drifted as in Nebraska or so heavy as there. A season at home was never enjoyed more than the week or two spent with

the loved ones immediately following this trip. I can never forget the sweet associations of this particular period, which seemed intended to leave a sort of flavor in our lives for the experiences which followed, as will be described in the following pages.

After this season at home, I left for Texas. I had an engagement to hold a meeting just at this time for Rev. S. F. Brown at Osceola, Ark.; but the Mississippi River was so badly blocked with ice that I could not make the trip, and hence, as above stated, went to Texas. I had no arrangement for work in Texas at the time; but as I had had an invitation to Mt. Pleasant, in that State, before Conference and could not accept, I thought it possible to get a meeting in there at this time. When I got off at Mt. Pleasant, however, the ground was covered with sleet, and the weather was quite cold for that country; and as our house of worship was not arranged for comfortable heating, the pastor thought it not well to try a meeting.

While at Mt. Pleasant the presiding elder, Rev. O. P. Thomas, with whom I had labored before, came in and insisted on my going to Pittsburg, a distance of a few miles, where he felt sure I could get a meeting. This I did, and was soon in a work there which resulted in one hundred and sixty odd conversions and reclamations and one hundred and seventeen additions to the Methodist Church. It was truly great! This opened the way for the meeting at Mt. Pleasant, where over a hundred more were added to our Zion. At Pittsburg the victory was easy; but at Mt. Pleasant this was not the case, and yet it was great when achieved. As in all revival efforts, so in these twin meetings at Pittsburg and Mt. Pleasant there were

both helps and hindrances. But these gave helpful experience for future work. Professor Nelson Gilreath, of Athens, Tex., was with us part of the time at both these places as leader of the choir, and did some good work. At Pittsburg the presence of the "shouting banker," Rev. Lon Morrison, whose home is there, was quite an inspiration, as he threw his whole influence into the work and didn't miss a single service. I think he had reason to shout at every service. At first he would leave the house and go home when he would get to shouting, but before the meeting closed he would remain with us. They have one of the best-regulated Sunday schools at Pittsburg it has ever been my privilege to visit, under the superintendency of Brother Abernathy, of that place. Brother Abernathy had a fine hold on the people.

Another incident occurred here on the line of restitution. Brother Abernathy was engaged in the mercantile business. One morning a gentleman drove up to his store door and asked him to take a ride with him; said he wanted to talk with him. Soon after they had started, the gentleman stated to Abernathy that he must go out home with him, when Abernathy insisted that he could not do this, as he was quite busy. The distance was two or three miles; but the gentleman repeated that he must go and that he would have him back soon, and so drove on. They had soon reached his home. The gentleman stated to him that he had some years before swindled him out of twenty dollars, and that he had never been able since that time to enjoy religion; that every time he got in a good meeting and felt like taking any part in it that transaction and the twenty dollars would rise up before him

to condemn him; and with this he counted out forty dollars and handed it to Abernathy, who told him that the original twenty would do if he felt that he ought to pay it now; but the other man said that nothing less than double the amount would ever satisfy his conscience, and so insisted on his taking the amount offered. Abernathy returned and put twenty dollars of the amount in the missionary collection, and said he would hold the remaining twenty for the Lord where it might be needed most.

The janitor at this church was an old man, and was an active worker in the meeting as well. When the tide was high, he had understood in some way that the afternoon service was to be left off one day, and therefore did not ring the bell. However, on passing the church about the regular time for this service, and discovering that there were people in the church, he looked in, found the room crowded with worshipers, and exclaimed: "Bless God, they came without the bell!" This created quite a ripple of amusement. This same old man had a next-door neighbor who was in the whisky business; and becoming burdened about him in a special way, one day he went to his saloon, stood at the counter, and told the man how much interest he felt in him. That night this same saloon man stood on the platform in the meeting and declared in the presence of a large company that his place of business would not be open next morning and that he would sell no more whisky. At this a shout of praise went up to God for this deliverance, and our old janitor stated that if it had not been for the hope of saving his friend and neighbor he would not have gone into that saloon for a hundred dollars.

Another saloon keeper was converted in the Mt. Pleasant meeting. In this case the little son, probably not more than eight years old, had united with the Church. It was predicted by some that the father, who was doing a big whisky business, would be offended at this step on the part of the child, and would probably order his name taken from the Church roll; but, on the contrary, he became penitent himself as the result of this, came to the meeting, was happily saved, converted his saloon building into an ice cream parlor, and reformed his life in every particular. These and other cases made a wonderful impression for good, and also demonstrated God's power to save to the uttermost all who would come unto him.

At the beginning of the work at Mt. Pleasant I was called home by telegram to the bedside of my sick wife before I had myself been in a single service, although the pastor had begun the work. When I reached home I found Mrs. Kilgore better, and she insisted on my returning to my meeting, which I did. We had just begun to get the work under good headway when I was telegraphed for again, and again my wife was soon better and I returned to the meeting; but the train that brought me in this time carried our singer out, and thus it seemed that fate was against us. By this time the pastor had become discouraged, and no wonder, with all of these drawbacks. But that very day the work took a deeper and stronger hold, and it was soon evident that the Lord was going to give us great victory, which he did, as another week had not ended before (added to what had already been done) the Lord had given more than a hundred and fifty souls for our hire, and more than a hundred of

these had joined the Methodist Church. Rev. Albert Little was our pastor here, and he and his people were happy. I was entertained in Brother Little's home, and learned to love him very much. His amiable wife and sweet daughter also did what they could to make my stay with them pleasant, and they are still remembered with gratitude. A good man was in charge of our Church at Pittsburg at the time of the meeting there. God had given him a noble little wife and two sweet children, and he seemed to have a bright future; but he was afterwards drawn away and made shipwreck of the faith even before his pastorate was closed at this place. I am informed that he has since been reinstated.

The meeting over, I returned home again. Wife was still in the grasp of the fever which had held her fast for sixty-six days, with but little intermission; and in her case this was but the beginning of the end. She was never well again. Although she remained with us two years, yet it was only to waste away gradually with that dread disease, consumption. However, she was able to be up and was frequently with me in the work until within four months of the end. After a few weeks at home waiting on my wife until she was up again, I went to Greenville, Tex., to arrange for a home there, as we had decided to change places again, with the hope of benefiting wife's health and otherwise bettering our condition. Our plans were all soon completed, and we were ready for the change. But of this I shall give the reader more in the next chapter. We had some good friends at Searcy we were sorry to have to leave; but circumstances seemed to indicate the propriety of the move. So we were off.

CHAPTER LIX.

Move to Greenville, Tex.

Our plans were arranged hurriedly in making our move from Searcy, Ark., as I had been greatly hindered in my work already on account of sickness, thus causing financial loss as well as other drawbacks. I was therefore the more anxious to get to work again, as I was not able to be entirely idle, having had so much sickness already. Thus moving hurriedly, everything was not well equipped for the change, and hence there were hitches in the journey which were both unpleasant and expensive. Among other things, we were caused to miss connection at Texarkana, which cost us heavily there and also brought us to our destination in the night, which caused additional expense. But such things are incident to a lifetime, and must be borne when they come. Job said: "Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not receive evil?" Life is a mixed cup, and I suppose it is well that it is so. We would cling to this world too much if it were otherwise. As has already been seen in former pages, these disappointments and things that sometimes seem afflictive are only connecting links between occasions of a more pleasant character, and prepare us for greater usefulness in future work. Thus it proved in the above case. We were soon in Greenville and comfortably quartered.

Accompanied by Brother J. F. Anderson, I was soon

off for Bridgeport to fill an engagement with Brother Bounds. Bridgeport is a mining town, and was considered tough, and I suppose it was; but, as Providence would have it, I had secured the very man to help us there—one who seemed specially adapted to work among that class of people. Not that Brother Anderson was so rough himself; but having been in the saloon business sixteen years, he would naturally know more about how to approach all classes of people, and especially such as are overlooked, as a rule, by others; and this he did most efficiently during this meeting. He planned the campaign wisely, and then executed his own plans quite successfully. At least a hundred reported themselves saved, and almost as many united with the Churches. A little Cumberland Presbyterian preacher was also with us, and assisted Brother Anderson very greatly in his part of the work. It must be remembered here that Brother Anderson was not a licensed minister, but only a courageous, consecrated layman.

There was an extraordinarily large man among the miners they called "Jumbo," who seemed to have a large influence among his fellows. Brother Anderson struck for "Jumbo" the first one; and when he got him, the above results were soon accomplished. I made one visit to the shaft. I went down and then out through the subterranean alleys, where men were at work, probably a hundred and fifty feet below the earth's surface, and shook hands with the men and invited them to the meeting; and they came. In the mine while at their work they were smutty and greasy; but when out and dressed in their Sunday clothes some of them were really handsome, and in every way good

specimens of manhood. We found that some of them represented some of the best families of the older States, and some of them were quite well educated, having gone there and into that line of work for the money there was in it. It seemed quite a paying business, but of course was attended with constant danger. These men and their families seemed to greatly appreciate our efforts to save them, or the interest we took in them, and tried to evidence their appreciation in various ways. Our stay there was in every way pleasant, and we felt the better prepared for future work when the meeting was over.

Some things in all lines of work, I suppose, leave a more lasting impression than others. In the above meeting a young man among the miners was converted, went to his room, wrote to his mother in Alabama, and wound up his letter with the following language: "Your prayers have been answered, although I'm a thousand miles from home. I've been saved, and am to-day a member of the Methodist Church and on my way to glory." Brother Anderson secured a copy of this letter and sent it to the *Texas Christian Advocate* for publication.

Many other interesting incidents occurred in connection with this remarkable meeting; but I pause only to mention one more. There was an old brother who seemed very fond of talking in a testimony meeting, and would usually occupy the greater part of the time allotted to this part of the worship. We had tried to hold him down or in some way cut him short in his testimony, which was generally about the same story over and over; but we had failed to be able to do this. One day there was a downpour of rain during the

service. This old brother got the floor, and I thought it a good time to let him have his say out, as we could not get home anyway until the rain ceased; so, with as much encouragement as was necessary, I let him go on. It would be a little difficult to estimate the length of his talk. Preachers who have conducted revivals know something about such things. There are some people in most congregations who never know when to stop when they are given an opportunity to talk—often, too, they are people who do not help a meeting by talking at all. This was not the case with this old brother. He was deeply pious, and had a good influence in the community, but was simply "long-metered" when in a meeting. After the service referred to above was over and we were walking away from the tent (it was a tent meeting), the Cumberland Presbyterian preacher with us, who seemed to have been a little impatient (the old brother referred to was a member of his Church), said to me: "Brother Kilgore, how do you ever manage such cases as this?" My answer was: "I just let them talk on until they are through if it is raining, so that we have to remain at the church anyway." This seemed to amuse the brother very much.

The meeting over at Bridgeport, Brother Anderson and the writer went direct to Denton, Tex., for another meeting before returning home. We were entertained there by a Mr. Kimbrough, and had a very pleasant time during our stay. Our meeting here was also held in a tent, and was a good one. The attendance was very large, and a goodly number were saved and added to the Church. It was here that Brother Anderson came into the experience of sanctifi-

cation, and he has ever since been clear in his testimony as to the experience. The doctrine of sanctification has always been stressed more or less in our meetings; but I have never been as clear as I probably ought to have been in pressing the experience. But not so with Brother Anderson. He is very clear, and makes it very plain. The doctrine is one thing, and the experience is quite another. One thing has always stood in my way of publicly professing this as a personal experience, and I have sometimes thought that the devil was probably using this as a tool to keep me from doing the good I might have done by being clear. I have known definitely what this experience was for more than eight years; but I had gotten behind financially, and, owing to continued sickness in my home (of which more will be written hereafter), I have never been able to catch up, and have always felt that if I should testify to this high and holy experience people would take advantage of it and say: "Why don't he pay his debts?" Thus the cause would be damaged rather than helped. Of course I have known all the while that there would be no justice in this accusation on the part of the enemy, as I have never seen the day when I would let the sun go down on my debts if I could command the cash to pay them off; but this has not been the case, and thus it has probably been used by the enemy to prevent my doing a greater amount of good.

At Denton we were associated with that stalwart Christian gentleman, Mr. J. B. Collins, a consecrated layman in the M. E. Church, who helped us along the way. Such men in the Church are a tower of strength for good. Rev. J. F. Pierce was our pastor here. He is a strong Christian character. He is a descendant of

the Pierce family of Georgia, and partakes of the character of the fathers.

The work ended at Denton, I was soon at home again to enjoy another sweet season of rest with the loved ones.

This time the Greenville District Conference held its session at Nevada, Tex., and I ran down and spent a day or two with the brethren. On Saturday afternoon of the Conference the Epworth League was given an hour, and the meeting was led by a young man I had never met before. He was rather tall, with a good, open countenance; he had an honest face, and I thought was rather handsome, and was endowed with a remarkably good voice, being a leader in the service of song. I inquired of a friend sitting near me as to who this young man was, and was informed that his name was Ed Phillips and that he was one of the Nevada boys and was preparing for the ministry. With this I sought and obtained an introduction to him, and asked him if he would not like to join me in some meetings as chorister. His reply was that he could not, as he had promised his pastor, Rev. C. I. McWhirter, to help him in his meetings. Later, however, he wrote me that after considering the matter more carefully he had decided to go with me some. We were associated in the work from time to time for nearly three years, of which I may give frequent notes on future pages. Suffice it to say here that, as in all things when I have trusted him for guidance, I believe the Lord's hand was in the bringing us together in this work. I only fear that we often failed to recognize the hand of Providence in such things as much as we might, and in this way missed the blessings intended.

CHAPTER LX.

Kansas Camp Meetings.

Arrangements were made in the beginning of this year while in Nebraska with Rev. T. C. Downs, presiding elder of the Atchison District, Western Conference, for some camp meeting work in his territory during the early summer, and the time was now up. The first engagement was at Arrington, Kans., and our route was over the Cotton Belt to Fort Worth, thence over the Santa Fe via Oklahoma City, Wichita, and Topeka to Valley Falls, Kans., and thence by private conveyance to the camp, thus bringing us through a very rich section of country and giving us the privilege for the first time of seeing the proud capital of Kansas. I do not now recall whether the District Conference was connected with this camp meeting or not, but the district was well represented by the preachers in the beginning of its history, and some of them remained almost through the meeting. I am inclined to think, however, as my recollection serves me, that it was only a camp meeting occasion. The results of the work here were not as large as at some other places; still the meeting was by no means a failure, as more than forty persons united with our Church—and this, too, with as tremendous an influence against the cause of Christianity as I had ever found in any place. Infidelity was rife. There was an old man living just on the hill overlooking the camp ground whose name was

Van Winkle, and they had dubbed him "Uncle Rip;" and he was a pretty good representation, in physical form at least, of the idea I had formed of "Rip Van Winkle" in other days. I will not attempt a description of him here, however, as different persons form different opinions about people and things, and the pictures drawn in the mind are often disappointing when the real is presented. But the man of whom I write here was a pronounced infidel, and had quite a following in his section. I conversed with him frequently while there, and my conclusion was that he came as near being a real infidel as any man I had ever met. In fact, he had, I think, made such an effort on that line all his life that he hardly believed anything. One day in conversation he had just taken the position that there was no such thing as "up and down," that such things were only imaginary; and in the next moment, in speaking of some ailment he had, he said he fell down and hurt himself, when I reminded him that he must be mistaken, that "there was no such thing as down." He replied with some evident excitement: "No, there isn't; it's all in the imagination." Thus he was wasting his life disputing about nothing. As already suggested, he wielded an influence and had a following. I approached one of his disciples one afternoon and told him I felt an interest in him and had felt it my duty to manifest this interest in this way, and that I hoped he would take it kindly at least, as I only wished him well. He said: "Certainly; but it is very presumptuous in you to be trying to push your views of things off on other people." I told him I only wished to present Christ to him; and asked him if he did not believe, according to the rec-

ord, that Christ was at least a good man. His reply was that he thought him to have been a "miserable, dirty tramp." I then asked him if he did not believe the Bible to be the word of God—an inspired book. He said: "No more so than an almanac." I was here reminded that the Master had said: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." So I turned from him and walked away. But, with all these adverse influences, our meeting was successful, as shown above.

This camp ground was located near a bluff on Grasshopper River, and near by at the crossing there was a large water mill. The milldam was built of huge rocks forming a perpendicular wall on the lower side eight or ten feet in height, which made a considerable waterfall, especially in time of high waters. A little while before the meeting a party of pleasure seekers were there boating above the dam, and in a spirit of fun allowed their boat to approach too near this waterfall, when they could no longer control it, and as a consequence were swept over the dam and dashed to death on the rocks below. So it is with those who give themselves over to the pleasures of this world. Ofttimes such persons are at an unexpected moment hurled into eternity without preparation.

But I mentioned the presence of this river to relate a circumstance of quite a different character. Toward the close of our camp meeting two young ladies gave their names for membership in the Church with the request to be baptized by immersion. As the pastor was an undergraduate in the Conference, I had agreed to attend to this work for him, and announced the service for 9 A.M. on the day following the close of

the meeting. It was placed after the meeting in order that any others who might wish to be baptized in this way might have an opportunity to come in with them. After midnight on the morning the baptizing was to take place I had a nervous rigor (probably the result of overwork), which lasted two or three hours. I thought my time had about come, but I felt better when the rigor was gone. I did not get up for breakfast, as I did not feel well enough to do so; but when the hour was near at hand for the girls to be baptized, I arose and dressed for the occasion, feeling as I did that some one would probably be ready to say that I had simply claimed to be sick in order to avoid this work. When the time was up and we were at the river's brink, I thought that, as it was some distance from the bank to the deep water—that is, deep enough to baptize in—I would take both the young ladies in with me at once, so as to avoid a second trip. But when I had immersed one of them, she became so frightened, although the work had been easily done, that she would not allow me to turn her loose while I administered the ordinance to the other. So I was compelled to make the trip with her to the bank and leave the other standing in the water until I could return. She, too, seemed frightened almost to death at having to be left for the time; so I was grateful, and I suppose they were glad, when it was all over. The people seemed pleased that I had gotten through at all without drowning the whole company. With this the meeting was over, and I was soon on board the train speeding away toward Hillsdale, Kans., where the next camp meeting was to be held the following week, and the time seemed long.

Hillsdale is on the Kansas City, Memphis & Birmingham Railroad, thirty miles south of Kansas City, and is in a fine section of farming country. They had the best-arranged camp I had seen in the bounds of the Western Conference; and while the number of tenters was not large, still there were enough to take care of all who came to the camp to stay, and there was a large "restaurant" kept where all could take their meals. This was patronized even by some of the tent holders. The ministers were fed at this stand free, while meals were served to others at very low rates. The fare was good. The restaurant was run by Brother Weaver, of the M. E. Church. We called him "Uncle Billie." He was a noble, good fellow, and he and I got to be right "chummy" while I was there. Brother Downs, the presiding elder, tented at this camp himself, and I found his family very pleasant indeed. I found a few colored people at this camp who worshiped with the white folks. The negroes all sat in a company in the congregation out in front of the stand and a little to the preacher's right, and they would speak in the testimony meetings and come forward to shake hands with the minister when a proposition was made to the Church. I had never seen it exactly on this wise before, and it was a little difficult at first for me to adapt myself to the situation. I was informed that there were not enough of them in the community to have a church of their own, and that they were therefore allowed to worship with the whites. I thought this perfectly right under such circumstances, and felt glad to see them enjoy the meeting. I did not remain till the close, but was there long enough to witness a good work.

Among the converts of the meeting up to the time I left I remember a Mr. Hampson. He was a wealthy farmer and ranchman, so I was informed, and had been quite wicked; but as our work progressed he became interested. Uncle Billie Weaver was the first to discover this, and remarked to me one day after dinner that he believed Mr. Hampson was interested. He asked me to keep an eye on him, and if there seemed any hope of saving him to try to follow up and cultivate as far as might be convenient or possible any good impressions that seemed to be made on him. That afternoon during the sermon Mr. Hampson sat where I could see him easily. I was encouraged enough when the sermon was over to go to him and ask him if he did not want to be a Christian. He was greatly moved; and when I invited him to the altar with me, he arose and without a word went and got on his knees at the place of prayer, and very soon gave his heart to God. This all made a fine impression for good on others, as he had a large influence in that community and would naturally have a good following in this new movement on his part. It was almost a year later when I received a letter from Rev. H. D. Hogan, who lived in that community, stating that all the converts were holding out faithfully and that the Hampsons were pillars in the Church. I thanked God for the little part I may have had in bringing about this change in his life.

My work here for the time was now accomplished, and I was soon at home again to prepare for work in other fields. Many things connected with this visit to Kansas in the work of the Lord will be treasured up as among the pleasant reminiscences of life.

My next meeting was at Mt. Vernon, Tex., with Rev. J. H. Hunter, where I was joined in the work by Brother Ed Phillips as "singer." We were entertained while here in the pleasant home of Dr. Fleming, and were treated right royally by all the people. The Lord gave us a decided victory here, and a large number were added to the Church. We left Brother Hunter and his people happy. I found Brother Hunter to be a noble, good fellow and very easy to work with. He made one feel perfectly at home in his meeting, and hence there was perfect harmony, which naturally left pleasant recollections. I should be glad to see this dear man of God again and join him in another meeting like this.

When through at Mt. Vernon we went to Commerce, Tex., to assist Rev. C. B. Thomas in a meeting; and also found him possessed of a very genial spirit. We were with him two weeks; and while the results were not as large as desired, still some good was accomplished. This was a tent meeting, and we witnessed rather a novel sight here—that of fifty-one men kneeling at the altar as penitents at one time, and not a single lady. This was more or less the case through the entire meeting. We did not witness so very many conversions; still there was a very good ingathering to the Church. Rev. F. A. Taylor was with us in this meeting, and did some able preaching and fine work.

After this we went to Arkadelphia, Ark., to help Brother Godden, where a good work was accomplished and a large class received into the Church; but the work here did not accomplish all we had desired. Our stay in Brother Godden's home was exceedingly pleasant. Sister Godden is a Jewess, but is a beautiful Christian character, and has made Broth-

er Godden a most estimable wife and companion in the work. Godden is truly a man of deep piety and scrupulous integrity. There were some influences here to overcome which were more formidable of the kind than we had ever found at any other time or place. One of these was the cigarette habit among the young men and boys. This was practiced to an alarming extent. Before the services when the people were assembling for worship and when the service was over and they were passing out there was invariably a large crowd about the doors sending up a perfect cloud of smoke, and the fumes of the tobacco would be wafted in by the breezes all the way to the pulpit. This was continued until the ministers were compelled to pay their respects to the practice in more ways than one. The people seemed convinced that the foundation was being laid by these boys for lives of dissipation; hence a stronger effort was made to rescue them, which evidently resulted in great good for a time at least.

Another trouble we found here was a spirit of rivalry between two colleges representing different Churches, which had almost developed into personal animosities. This should always be very carefully guarded against in our denominational schools, as such a spirit is very hurtful to the cause as well as to the communities in which it exists, and sometimes ends in disturbances the evil effects of which remain in a town or community for years afterwards. I am glad to record here, however, that this spirit was abated in the abovenamed place without such results as are here mentioned. The schools in Arkadelphia are in many particulars equal to any other schools in the land for the good they are doing. We found this especially true of

Arkadelphia Methodist College during the time it was our privilege to patronize it.

While in Arkansas on this round I also held meetings at New Louisville and Forrest City. Brother Phillips was not with me at these two places, however, as he was otherwise engaged. Brother McCabe was in charge of the Methodist Church at New Louisville, and I found him a good yokefellow in the gospel. My home while there was at Brother Nance's, which I found to be a very sweet home indeed. The results were not large here; still a good class was received into the Church—more than twenty in number. It was here, however, that I got a straight-out cursing on the start for having preached the truth. On Monday night I had preached on the evil results of the modern dance. On the following Friday morning I was walking in town in company with Brother Cason, presiding elder of the district. Passing in front of a store, Brother Cason turned in, saying he wanted to make some purchases while there, and as he passed in spoke to a man standing near the door, who returned the compliment. I then spoke to him also, but he replied to me: "I am not making any new acquaintances." I said, "All right," and started in myself, thinking that he possibly supposed that I had planned a talk with him and that he didn't care to be bothered; and as he was a perfect stranger to me, I did not care to trouble him further. But I had scarcely turned when he began to curse me—called me all sorts of ugly things, with bitter oaths—and had his knife in his hand whittling vigorously. I stood still and looked at him, having turned facing him, and when he had subsided a little I asked him coolly if he was through, and with this he cursed again.

I then told him that I felt that I was as much of a Christian gentleman then as before he cursed me. He then replied that he had his opinion about this, when I reminded him very coolly that his opinion didn't change the thing at all, that his opinion amounted to very little in this matter anyway. He was cursing me for having preached against the dance; but this cursing did not stop me from the business. The presiding elder remarked as we walked away that I certainly had more religion than he had, as he felt that he would have worn out the ground with that fellow if it had been possible. I told him that I had never specially coveted the reputation of a fighting preacher, and that even if I had I would not care to secure it by a fight with such a fellow as this. When the affair was noised abroad, the people seemed very much incensed at his vicious act, and were planning an indignation meeting; but I asked them not to do anything of the sort, telling them that the poor deluded fellow would get the worst of it anyway if he did not change his life, which I hoped, however, he would do. Thus the unpleasant episode was passed, and no further harm done. I passed the fellow several times on the streets after this, but no words were passed. Some of his friends said, however, that they thought he was very sorry for his rude conduct, but that he did not have courage or manhood enough about him to come to me and apologize. This I did not care for him to do, though, only in so far as it might go toward saving him.

As above intimated, when this meeting had closed I went to Forrest City to help Rev. F. E. Taylor, and our meeting there proved to be one of the most successful of the season. This was my third revival at

Forrest City, and the meetings came in the order of good, better, best—"the best of the wine at the last of the feast." A good, large class was received into the Church—and this, too, of the very best element of the town. The town was mightily stirred. There was a political campaign on in the State and county, and excitement on this line had been running high. But the meeting got such a sweep in the town that all other things seemed for the time forgotten. During the closing days of our work there some one met Colonel Izard on the street and asked him how politics was running, and his answer was that he hadn't heard politics mentioned in ten days. The good people here did not forget to express their appreciation of my work in a substantial way. While their liberality was not large, they contributed more cheerfully than some other places that were much more able than they. Indeed, if other places had offered compensation for my work even in approximate proportion to Forrest City, there would never have been the financial pressure and sometimes embarrassment in my life as has been the case. I shall ever remember with special gratitude those who have remembered me. I was entertained at the parsonage while in Forrest City, and never was time spent more pleasantly from a social standpoint. Brother Taylor himself was always brimful of innocent fun, and every member of his household was a facsimile of the father on this line—"a chip off the old block." Theirs was truly a home filled with social sunshine, or at least I found it so. I give all the praise to the Lord, however, for the success which attended my labors here.

Of course my visits home must be as frequent as

possible, and especially so now, as we had succeeded in securing a three-acre lot in the suburbs of Greenville on which a house was being built for a residence; and as we were anxious to move into it at the earliest possible convenience, the work must be pushed to completion.

My next meeting was at Marshall. It will no doubt be understood that hundreds of intervening things happened which can never be written, as I am only touching the high places as I pass along. Brother Phillips joined me again at Marshall, where we united our forces for a successful battle with sin and Satan. Rev. J. T. Smith was our pastor there at the time. He is meek as a lamb, and yet courageous as a lion. With such a pastor as this to back me and a well-organized choir, with a good leader, such as Brother Phillips always proved himself to be, and with other helps which could be mentioned, the results of the work here were far from being what I had hoped to make them by the help of the Lord. "A great and effectual door was opened unto me, and there were many adversaries." The "social club" craze was on there in "good style." This was especially true of the women. It was here one afternoon that sixty-six women met in one home for a "progressive euchre party," and next morning the city dailies came out with a full column under great headlines, giving a description of the occasion in detail, even as to the style of costume worn by each lady. These same dailies had not up to this time given an inch of space to our meeting. In the account given of this party it was stated that Mrs. A won the first prize, while Mrs. B and Mrs. C had tied for the second prize, and Miss D

had secured the third prize—straight-out gambling among the women. This party embraced one of the hours for our religious service at the church. No wonder there were organized "clubs" for the young men, and "clubs" for young women, and "clubs" for old men, and "clubs" for children in a town where the wives and mothers led the way and set the example. With such influences to combat, it would be difficult to have success anywhere. Still our meeting was not an entire failure here by any means. The interest increased and the work continued until a good class had been received, and among them some of the leaders. Besides this, some old troubles which had been disturbing the Church were settled. A sermon was preached on forgiving our enemies on Sunday morning, and on the following Monday morning Mr. Johnson, a leading merchant, watched for his neighbor merchant to open his store door, and when this was done went at once to speak to him for the first time in twelve years. They had lived in the same town and all this time engaged in the same line of business without any touch with each other in any particular; but on this Monday morning the whole matter was settled, and they were ever afterwards good friends. Such are the results of a good meeting.

Rounding up favorably at Marshall, we next filled an engagement at Jefferson, Tex., where we spent ten days in total defeat so far as visible results were concerned. Brother Whitehurst was the pastor here, and was truly a good man and loved by his people; but there were other influences against us that we were never able to overcome. Quite an amusing incident occurred in the social circle while we were here.

We were all sitting in the family room at our boarding place one afternoon when a lady came in and our hostess was introducing her. Brother Phillips had been engaged in reading and was still holding his book, when our hostess said to her friend: "That is Mr. Phillips with a book in his hand." Brother Phillips arose and bowed very politely, saying: "Good afternoon, Sister Bookingham." The name of the lady who was being introduced was Wilson; but Brother Phillips did not wait for the name, thinking the lady had said Bookingham, when she said "with a book in his hand." He saw his mistake at once, however, and was greatly embarrassed. There was not a single addition to the Church in the above meeting or any other good accomplished that we could see; hence we closed and were soon off to our homes again.

About this time our new home was completed, and the "dear ones" had moved in and were very comfortably quartered. The home was very nice indeed and quite convenient in every way. My wife and children never seemed so happy as then. Wife had had the house built and arranged according to her own notions, and had shown excellent taste.

El Paso and Old Mexico.

When things had all been properly adjusted at home, I started on another trip to hold the closing meeting of the year at El Paso, Tex. The journey was a long one. I was again accompanied by Brother Anderson, who had been with me earlier in the year at Bridgeport and Denton. *En route* to El Paso we stopped off at Abilene, and rode out a distance of

twenty-eight miles and returned the same day, making the full distance fifty-six miles. The purpose of this visit to the country was to see my sister and her family, who lived near Anson; but we had no idea of the distance or we would never have started, as it was the Sabbath and we were compelled to return to meet the first train in order to use the special rate tickets we had secured for the trip. We were informed that it was only a little way out from Abilene, and could learn nothing definite until most of the distance going had been traveled. We had only one hour to spend with sister after reaching her home. The trip was quite tiresome; and when over we continued our journey to El Paso.

Rev. C. J. Oxley was in charge of our Church at El Paso. He is, I may say, in many respects rather a wonderful man. He is an Englishman by birth, and bears all the marks peculiar to his nationality. He is a man of quick and clear discernment, and is possessed of a superabundance of moral courage as well as convictions of right on all moral questions. He counted nothing success in the work that did not measure up in every particular to his idea of the genuine, and would accept nothing short of this. Under such leadership his people had been brought up to high-water mark in the Christian experience and in Church work. His own personal experience as to conversion and sanctification was very clear, and he endeavored to bring others to the same high plane of profession.

El Paso was one of the wickedest places I had ever visited. Being a border town, all the toughs of America and Mexico seemed to have concentrated there; and hence there was wickedness in high places and low

places. Many people were as vile as vile could be; and yet in the face of all this, Brother Oxley's Church was one of the most thoroughly religious I have ever seen. It was a custom for young men and young women, as well as older ones, to drop on their knees and engage in a season of prayer when they entered the house of worship; and then with shining faces they would testify to Christ's power to save to the uttermost, and were by their testimonies a perpetual inspiration to their pastor and the leaders. It is a rare treat to worship with such a congregation.

Another thing noted in this Church was the work of Christian men and women of the first rank, young and old, in rescuing the fallen. It was interesting indeed to see young ladies of the best homes—Christian girls—go down in the slums to save their sisters who had been drawn away and whom society would no longer recognize. We met some who were themselves among the Christian workers who had been thus saved; and we thought of the great contrast there was between this and some things we had witnessed in other places, where the women of the Church seemed to imagine that the whole cause would be dishonored if one such should be received among them. However, we felt sure we could see more of the spirit of the Master manifested in the conduct of the El Paso Christians than at these other places.

With such a backing as we had here, as described above, the reader will not be astonished when I tell him that our meeting was successful. Brother Anderson did some fine work here. On the first day we spent in El Paso Brother Anderson was strolling on the streets, and as he was passing some men one of them said,

"Hello! There's old Jim Anderson." He told Brother Anderson that he had visited his saloon at Greenville many a time. Brother Anderson replied: "Yes; that's the way." He said that he could never get away from the influence of his old life; that he thought he would get away over there, almost in Mexico, where no one would know him; but that after running a miserable, dirty saloon, with all the attachments the devil could suggest, he ought not really to expect to get where he could hide. He said that a dog's tail would always follow him, and that he supposed it would always be so in his case, but that he intended as far as possible to try to undo what he had done and at least, if no more, give the remainder of his days to Christ. He is doing this in the fullest sense of the word.

On the last night of the meeting at El Paso two preachers came into the work who were both members of the New Mexico Conference. At the close of the service, which had been one of the very best, one of the visiting ministers, who was a sanctified preacher and who has since joined the Army of Evangelists and is doing a great and good work in the West, approached me, saying he once knew a preacher in Mississippi by my name. I told him I was from Mississippi, when he said that the one he knew was a young preacher. I told him that I was once a young preacher. He then asked me if I had ever preached at McCondy, Miss. I told him I had served as pastor there three years. He then threw his arms around me, and said: "Bless the Lord, you received me into the Church!" I thanked God then and do now for helping me to start this wave for good in the far West.

The meeting closed at El Paso, and I went home.

It may probably be remembered that it was at El Paso, or just across the river from there, in Old Mexico, that I was once robbed. But the Lord had now let me go back to the same spot to do some work for him, and had crowned this work with rich results. This was the last meeting of the year, as I reached home on Christmas day to rest one week, and then launched forth for what proved to be probably the most successful season of my whole career as a Christian minister. But I shall write later of this and of the other things of the year, which were mixed up with sadness as well, for there must be bitter as well as sweet in every life.

CHAPTER LXI.

Revivals of 1896.

On the closing night of the old year I took part in a watch night service at Wesley Chapel Church in the city of Greenville, Tex., which was the most satisfactory service of the kind I had ever attended. It was led by that wide-awake presiding elder, Rev. W. M. P. Rippey, who seemed to throw his whole soul into the service. Just as the bells began to ring out the old year and ring in the new Brother Rippey offered a very fervent prayer, and made a special prayer for me in my work, that the Lord would crown my labors during the new year with success. Somehow I believed then that this prayer would be answered; and it was most abundantly, as will be seen in perusing these pages. On New Year's night I began a meeting with Rev. C. I. McWhirter at Nevada, Tex., which lasted two weeks, and which was crowned with the conversion of one hundred and sixty-five souls and over a hundred additions to the Methodist Church. This was the beginning of a succession of victories. From the start, however, success did not seem possible. New Year's day and the two following days were beautiful and bright—looked like springtime had come. The farmers went to plowing vigorously, and everything else seemed in motion; hence our attendance at the meeting was quite small. This was especially true of the day services. A cot-

tage prayer meeting had been announced for the first afternoon with Brother Rollow, whose home seemed always open for such things. When the time came, Sister Rollow, Dr. Brockman (an old superannuated preacher), the singer, and I were all who were present. Brother Ed Phillips was our leader in song again, as this was his home. It was through his influence that this place had been opened for this early meeting.

Seeing that we had failed to reach the people by means of the cottage meeting, I told Brother Phillips we would hold a meeting downtown the next afternoon, if an office or vacant storehouse could be secured for the purpose; and although he expressed a degree of skepticism as to the probable success of this new movement, still, as I insisted on trying the experiment, he secured the place, an office which opened right on the sidewalk on the main street of the town, and the service was accordingly announced. The people were earnestly solicited to attend, especially the Christian workers and those who could sing or take any part in the service; but when the hour came only a few were present, and Brother Phillips himself was not there. He was near enough, however, to hear the singing when we began the service, and soon came in, although he said afterwards and so testified in the meeting that he never did a thing that was a greater cross to him than coming into that meeting; it seemed so much out of the regular order of things that he felt embarrassed about it. But we had gone but a little way in the service until others had come, and still others who in passing had heard us and turned in, for the Lord had already met with

us, and had bestowed a great blessing on some, so that shouts of praise were heard and "great grace was upon us all." There was no further difficulty in getting the people to attend the services at the church, nor was it necessary to hold another service downtown. They came to us, and the church was filled at nearly all the services. Even the afternoon services, which were held at the church after this, were largely attended, and there was the presence of convicting and converting power at every coming together. One other discouragement had confronted us just at the beginning, however, which was also soon overcome. There was a large school in session there at the time, but they paid no attention to us at first, as the teachers themselves were not much in sympathy with the Church or religion. We knew that to get a hold on the young people would go far toward victory in the work in hand, and so we visited the school, but seemed to make very little impression. However, we were specially attentive to those who did come from the school, and the numbers soon increased until finally the meeting got such a hold that the teachers were forced to recognize the meeting and come themselves or lose their school for the time, as the pupils were remaining at home from school to attend the meeting. In this connection an amusing incident occurred which gave the brethren something to laugh about. I was invited to take supper in a home, and while there awaiting the announcement of the evening meal I asked a young man present, who was hardly grown, if he was attending our meeting. He replied that he was not; that he was trying to "get knowledge." I told him if he would come

around we might be able to teach him some knowledge that would make him wise unto salvation, when he said that he was talking about such knowledge as he could get in school, that we had never studied anything but to preach. I then asked him as to his studies; and when he had named them to me, I told him that I had gone over this very ground probably before he was born and had taught school three years, giving instruction in the same things he had mentioned. He said: "O, you are educated, then!" I told him not nearly as much as I would like to be, but that I had been a student a long time and was still trying to gather knowledge from everybody and everything, and that I frequently got good instruction in the sciences and else where I had least expected it, and that it might be so with him as he passed along. He came into the meeting later, was powerfully converted, and related what I have recorded here in a testimony meeting, ridiculing himself for his former ideas of men and things. St. Paul tells us that "by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." So it seems that faith enables us to "understand," and thus we get knowledge by believing, or at least our knowledge is strengthened in this way. The above was truly a great meeting, both as to its immediate results and its scope of influence through the surrounding country. One of the inspired writers has told us that "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," and so I have ever found it. People under such influence will laugh and rejoice and speak freely. In fact, all formality is broken and conventionalities laid aside, and there is a freedom that was unknown before.

In the meeting at Muskogee, of which record has already been made, when we were all rejoicing one day and laughing in praise to God, an old brother, who had not been in the meeting up to this time, was called on to pray. He got down and asked the Lord to help us to be reverent in his house, which spirit we all indorsed, and felt that our meeting was fully in keeping with this sentiment, but we were happy over the rich results of the meeting, rejoicing over the return of prodigals. I turned and read the one hundred and twenty-sixth Psalm and commented on it in justification of our behavior. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." We talk about "apostolic succession." Here is succession that goes back of the apostles, away back to the days of David. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" and thus it was in our meeting at Nevada, Tex. Near its close, one night when the house was very much crowded and the people had crowded in the altar during the after service and were standing almost as thick as they could, Brother McWhirter secured room enough in the center to show how Dr. Summers used to do in the Vanderbilt Chapel when the preachers would deliver sermons which would help him. He said the Doctor would move back and forth on the rostrum, saying: "These preachers stir me to the bottom. They stir me to the bottom." In the meantime I had gotten on top of a table where I could see what was going on in the different parts of the congregation, when Brother Rippey, the presiding elder, looked up at me and said, "They will have to get a long

pole if they stir that fellow to the bottom," referring to me on the table. Though this meeting had to close, the work did not cease. Meetings were organized for the young men and other classes, which were continued to great profit, and there were still other conversions reported in these social meetings, and at least two young preachers were developed here who have since become quite useful.

My next meeting was at Farmersville, with Rev. E. H. Casey. It will be remembered that I had helped Brother Casey in a very successful meeting at Sulphur Springs the preceding year, and hence he was acquainted with my methods. In these meetings we had secured the services of a young man to play the piano for us, which added very greatly to our music; and besides the piano and organ, we were favored with the presence and services of two cornetists and one or two violinists with their respective instruments. Brother Anderson was also with us, as well as Brother Phillips. So we had a full team. No wonder we had success, with such a band of consecrated workers as the above, for every one mentioned was soul and body in the work, full-fledged Christians. Indeed, the cornetists, violinists, and pianist were all converts of the Nevada meeting, and hence were fully enthused in their work. There were seventy odd additions to the Church in the Farmersville meeting. As to ingathering, the results were not so large, however, as they should have been with the material we had to work with. I am sure we sometimes had seventy-five to a hundred penitents at the altar at different times. There was a dentist at Farmersville who, although he was a member of the Meth-

odist Church and was taking considerable interest in the meeting, had only a little while before won a fine gold watch in some game of chance, which had caused a considerable amount of criticism and which was then being used as an influence against the meeting, since he was making himself so prominent in the work. So an exhortation was given on this line, and such practices as raffling and all sorts of questionable things of the kind were excoriated and denounced. At the next service this dentist stood before the congregation and openly confessed his wrong, although nothing had been said directly of his personal act in this matter; and he handed the watch to Brother Casey, to be used for missionary purposes or otherwise, as he might choose. He said he had never worn the watch, and could not conscientiously do so, as his conscience had condemned him ever since it had been in his possession. The conscience is a pretty good monitor, if one will only follow its dictates perfectly. It will, if not abused, invariably reprove sin and condemn wrong.

A special subject was announced for a certain hour one day, and everybody was invited to hear the sermon. A Christian physician met his Hebrew neighbor and asked him to the service. He came, and was so well pleased with the meeting that he invited the doctor into his store that afternoon and made him a present of a fine hat for having invited him to the service. These and many other influences were the means of bringing about the rich results already recorded. It was in this meeting one afternoon that a young man of a Presbyterian home was converted and waved his hands over the congregation, saying: "These are the

prettiest folks I ever saw." He was simply looking through new glasses. The children of the different congregations were being thus converted, and the various Churches built up in spirituality and in numbers; yet frequently ministers of other denominations would try to ignore us in the work, except to gather in all the members possible. At one of these meetings a minister whose home was in the town, but who had not found time to come about the meeting, gathered up a class and announced an hour privately for their reception and received them before we had ever offered an opportunity for people to join the Church at all. But his own members criticised him so afterwards that he was almost compelled to come to the meeting and take part in self-defense. We had witnessed such things before on similar occasions. It is interesting to see such a one forced to yield to the manifest power of the Holy Ghost. Such people need to be taught such lessons by being made to feel their own littleness and insignificance in the presence of the on-sweep of the kingdom of God. Many other things might be written here, but I must pass on to a record of other victories at other places.

The next meeting was at Wylie, Tex., and resulted in the conversion of at least fifty souls, and more than forty were added to our roll of membership. It was here I first witnessed a Campbellite preacher of some prominence working among penitents, talking to them, praying for them, and shaking hands with them like other Christians; but I have seen this since at other places. A leading physician here, who had been very wicked, became interested and was quite penitent. One of his former associates in sin wrote

him a letter full of ridicule, asking him if he had decided to join the company who expected to wear long white gowns in some pretty parlor in some unknown country, and a number of other irreverent questions. The doctor brought the letter to me and asked me to answer it for him, as he had never given such subjects any consideration. I have always believed that God, in answer to prayer, aided me directly in writing this letter in answer to his bundle of trash, as the answer seemed to settle certain questions in the physician's mind as well as to stop this blatherskite from his ridicule. Strange, anyway, that one should not be satisfied with his own wicked life, if he chooses to live so, without trying to lead some one else to perdition with him; but such is the case always, and such can always find a following.

The meeting over at Wylie, Whitewright was the next "seat of war," and I was by no means as well organized for this new campaign as at the places mentioned above. Still the Lord was with me and gave success to the preaching of the word. Of all the helpers mentioned in the other meetings, I had only Brother Phillips with me here, and it soon became evident that he could not remain without a good deal of friction, as there was some home talent there for the service of song, and the people began to complain at once of the needless expense of having to pay for help from abroad when they were prepared to do this work without such help and expense. It was a real cross for me to inform Brother Phillips of these complaints, as this had occurred twice before, and he had become very much offended at me on one of these occasions when I mentioned the matter, which was

really as great an affliction to me as it could have been to him. But Brother Phillips was extremely sensitive, although he was otherwise a noble, good fellow; and, on the other hand, the people are usually scrupulously careful when it comes to the question of expense with reference to Church affairs. I mustered up courage, however, and told Phillips what was going on, and he left the meeting at once. So I was left alone, so far as my former helpers were concerned. But, as stated above, I had the home help. Then the pastor, Rev. J. A. Stafford, was a very earnest worker, and one, too, who put great stress on the promises of God and seemed very confidently and steadfastly to claim a victory; and he was not disappointed, for the Lord "sent us help from the sanctuary and strengthened us out of Zion."

We were already in the midst of victory and many were being saved when, to the great strengthening of our forces, Charlie Byron, the converted clown and a veritable flame of fire in the work of soul-winning, came into our midst. He could preach and sing and shout almost at the same time. He was a poet, and had already during the short time he had been a Christian composed more than forty beautiful songs, one of which was "Diamonds in the Rough," and he could sing these almost to perfection. He was indeed a very wonderful man. His experience was very striking and had a fine effect when related. It ran about as follows: He was serving as clown in Sells Brothers' show, and the show was at Fort Worth, Tex. They had presented their show in the daytime and were as usual to repeat the performance at night. Byron was partially dressed

in his clown's suit and was awaiting the hour when he walked out alone for a stroll on the street. Hearing singing in a certain locality, he turned in to see what was going on, as he had no other special way to spend the idle moments, and when in and seated he found himself in the midst of a religious meeting. His mind ran back over the years to his childhood days, when his mother, who was a Christian and a Methodist, was accustomed to take him to church with her, and as he began to reflect he thought how changed he was. It was the "Bethel Mission" he was in, and he had been seated but a short time when some Christian women approached him and asked him if he was a Christian and inquired about his mother and several things, which caused him to think even more seriously about the life he was living, and which led him to surrender his heart to God and separate himself from the show after that night. The managers of the show sued him for a breach of contract and had him put in jail, but he was helped out by others and went to work in the mission. He had been getting large wages for his work in the circus, but gave all this up and began work in the mission for the pennies that were contributed from time to time by those who felt disposed to give anything to this cause, as this was all voluntary on the part of those who gave. Charlie Byron as a "poet" had composed two thousand comic songs on the devil's side, but had, as has been stated, turned this talent in this new direction and had given to the Church a large number of beautiful songs when I met him and heard him preach and sing and shout. With Charlie Byron's help and the unwavering faith and consecrated efforts of Brother

Stafford, and also a well-equipped choir, we were under God enabled to score a victory for Christ, although our start here was not at all promising. At least one hundred were converted and added to the Church. The work was glorious, and I was strengthened for future work in other fields of labor.

A week or ten days must be spent at home with loved ones before going to the next place.

CHAPTER LXII.

More Revivals in 1896.

My next engagement was at Lone Oak, Tex., where I spent two weeks with Rev. I. S. Smith, who was one of the most indefatigable workers I ever met. His work was not altogether confined to the Church, and yet it was all for the Church. He spent a good deal of time in improving and beautifying the parsonage with the labors of his own hands, and the parsonage had been built during his ministry there by his own personal efforts. Besides this, he succeeded in having a beautiful house of worship built before he left the charge—one that would have done credit to a much larger place. The truth is, when he went to the charge they had no parsonage, and their house of worship was a miserable old shack located almost entirely out of town. We began our meeting in this old hull, with the ceiling but little above the preacher's head when in the pulpit. Brother Smith never let up until the new church above described was finished, and he in it as pastor. He remained there his full four years. He served as true and loyal people as I had ever seen; but they had, as I was left to conclude, simply never had a man of Brother Smith's style to serve them as pastor. I suspect that they thought it a pretty heavy tax to do so much in a financial way in so short a time; but they were all very proud of their new church and parsonage when they were completed. It

was truly a good work, and one, too, which will stand as a monument to the memory of Rev. I. S. Smith.

As already stated, we began our meeting in the old church, but soon secured the use of the Baptist church up in the center of town, which was a very neat house of worship and quite commodious. With this move the meeting soon took a deeper hold on the community, and we found ourselves in the midst of victory. During the two weeks spent there we witnessed a large ingathering to the Churches. The pastor of the Baptist Church came in at the close of the second week to fill his regular appointment, and I was present at his service on Saturday when he received twenty odd grown persons into his Church in one class. He seemed very much gratified to find such a work in progress in his church, even if it was being conducted by Methodist preachers; and I was treated very kindly by his people as well as by our own. My home while there was at the parsonage. Our pastor's wife was a Campbellite up to this time, but during this meeting united with the Methodists with her preacher husband. Of course he was very happy over this, although he nor any of us had troubled her on this line. Her act was voluntary, and was appreciated so much the more on his part and the part of the Church. She was a splendid little woman, but did not live very long to comfort her husband's life, as she died in their next charge; and Brother Smith for some cause located. I have lost sight of him, but will ever remember him and his faithful little wife for their unstinted kindness to me while in their home and charge. Many things more might be said here of Lone Oak and her people; but as I made another visit to this place, which will be recorded

in its place, I will pass for the present to other charges and things.

The next work was at McKinney, where we had rather a hard pull of it from start to finish. True, seventy-three conversions and reclamations were reported during the meeting; but this was accomplished through many discouragements. Brother Martin received a good class into our Church there, however, and seemed pleased with the work. I shall never forget a Brother Fleming of this place, who was a large man and quite strong, a member of the Church and of the choir, and a fine bass singer. He got happy one day in the service and went down one aisle and up the other, blowing and puffing like a steam engine. He would fairly shake the house when he would turn loose. I had never witnessed anything just like it. I never saw his equal. Everybody had the utmost confidence in him, as his life was above reproach—and this, too, notwithstanding he was in the livery business. One can carry on any honorable business and yet be a Christian. Here again I saw a Campbellite preacher of note work among the penitents, and he did a deal of good in this way, as he was so courageous and was also above reproach. He would work anywhere and any way for the Lord, and the people had great confidence in him, as he was open and frank. Dr. Talmage once said: "If one would have friends, he must show himself friendly." I have found it so.

Brother Allison, who lived here at this time, and who had formerly, as I was informed, been quite dissipated, had been previously converted, and was now an earnest worker in our meeting, and did us fine serv-

ice. This was another example of the transforming power and influence of the grace of God. As is written: "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." "Beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." Brother Allison's wife and two sweet daughters were all devoted Christians, and seemed very much rejoiced at this great change that had come into his life. My associations while at McKinney and the friendships formed were of the most pleasant character, and I treasure them with fond recollections.

After this I was in a meeting of four weeks' duration at Greenville, my home town, where I preached to hundreds of people in a large tent and witnessed the conversion of one hundred and twenty souls. While this was good, it was not nearly equal to what ought to have been accomplished with the great amount of material in reach. Rev. J. F. Alderson, who is considered one of the strongest preachers in the North Texas Conference, was our pastor here at the time, and manifested great interest in the meeting; but was not satisfied with the results. I was very much drawn to Brother Alderson while at Greenville on account of his great kindness and words of sympathy when I was "passing under the rod," of which more will be written hereafter.

Another special feature of the above meeting which caused it to make a more lasting impression on my

mind was the fact that it was the last meeting at home that the mother of my children ever attended with us. She began from about this time to decline more rapidly. She had attended the McKinney meeting with me just previously and was with me at Rockwall and Royse afterwards, but this was the last home meeting.

This work finished, I was off to Rockwall to assist Rev. J. Marvin Nichols. His was also a tent meeting. Some of his people had opposed the movement as to securing a tent, declaring that the church was large enough to hold all the people who would attend, and that it was therefore a needless expense to rent a tent, etc. But encouraged by others, the tent was secured, with a seating capacity of fifteen hundred, while the church would have held only five or six hundred at best. The place selected for the meeting was on the corner of the Public Square, in the center of the business part of the town, and it was only two or three days before our large tent was filled, as the interest was good from the beginning. A little later the tent was overflowed, and there was no room for the people. An additional tent was secured, with seating room for another thousand, and this was also crowded. Then wagon sheets were brought into service and put around these large tents, and the work went on until we were preaching to a multitude of people. They were in regular attendance from seven counties, and before two weeks had passed we had received two hundred and thirty-three into the Methodist Church, besides those who had given their names for other Churches. The officiary of the town and the business men had been brought in, and the

whole country round about was astir for Christ. Many very pleasant recollections linger with me as to this great work which I should like to give the reader in detail; but I would hardly know where to start or where to leave off, the incidents were so numerous. One woman asked us to pray for her children; said she had a "quantity of them." Another woman said she was sure she would meet me in heaven—"that is, if I ever got there." Well, of course I hope to get there. But so many things occurred, some amusing and some serious, that I prefer to pass them unless I could mention them all.

Among the noble men and women whom I met in these meetings none showed me greater kindness than W. H. Atherton. He was truly a good man, and I am due him a debt of gratitude I fear I shall never be able to pay. The mention of his name also reminds me that I saw a mule at his home that he had owned for forty-five years, and he had a violin which bore the date 1579 carved on the inside of it, thus showing it to be three hundred and seventeen years old.

When the meeting was over at Rockwall we moved our tent to Royse, a distance of nine miles, in the same county and on the same railroad, and held another two weeks' meeting, which resulted in adding one hundred and seventy more to the membership of the Methodist Church. It was almost as great in proportion as the Rockwall meeting, considering the difference in population of the two towns. Rev. Z. V. Liles was the preacher in charge and showed me great kindness while there. I shall always remember him gratefully for his manifest sympathy for my sick wife, who was with me there and who was barely able to attend any of the

services; but Brother Liles treated her so tenderly as to make it possible for her to attend more than she could have done otherwise. May the Lord reward him according to his good deeds! Several old men had figured in some of these meetings very much to the advantage of the good work. Uncle Elias White, Brother Stimson, Dr. Brockman, Brother McClure, Brother Atherton, and last, but not least, old Brother Galiger were only a few of those who did us good service, and whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Brother Galiger's name recalls some very pleasant and sometimes amusing memories. He got in "the swim" and went the rounds with us in several meetings. He was tall and straight as a reed, and rather handsome for an old man. He had a pleasing address, and when he would get up to testify, which was frequent, he would begin to laugh, and he would laugh and laugh and laugh until everybody in the congregation would become religiously amused and join him in the laugh; and it was sometimes hard to check this spirit so as to go on with the service. It was not unfrequent that Brother Galiger would sit down without saying what he intended to have said, so that the others could proceed with the testimony meeting. One day he got into a spell of laughing, and finally said: "Well, bless the Lord, you'll just have to let me have my laugh out." The leader responded: "Let her go, Galiger." It is a little peculiar as to the different ways in which people will manifest their religious feeling. Some will take it out in crying, others will shout, while others just as good will laugh, as in the above case. Different manifestations, but the same spirit. The writer has always preferred any kind of demon-

stration to that of graveyard stillness, as one represents life, while the other is a picture of death. The noise in Ezekiel's vision of the "valley of dry bones" was the first sign of life. Before there had been the stillness of death, and hence no living army to do battle for God. But after the noise and shaking under the preaching of the prophet, there stood up a living army. So I never felt like checking Brother Galiger in laughing, nor any one else in any other sort of religious demonstration. I remember that the Saviour once said: "If I command these to hold their peace, the rocks will cry out." The Lord's name will be praised, and according to the teaching of his word he seems specially pleased when his people speak his praises, as they are so often commanded to do.

When the meeting was over at Royse, where I had been associated with some of my lifelong friends —to wit, Minor Bounds and his brother Patrick—and where I had formed some other very pleasant friendships, and after a few days at home, I went to Van Alstyne to assist Rev. Dr. Carroll, with whom I had worked before in the great meeting at Greenville. The meeting at Van Alstyne was moving off gloriously and thirty-seven had already been received into the Church when I was called home by telegram.

After this I was engaged in good meetings at Mt. Vernon, Josephine, and a day or two at Tate, Tex. I was compelled to go and come almost daily to and from these meetings on account of the condition of my wife, who by this time seemed to be rapidly declining, although she was still able to be up; but it was soon evident that she was going down with that dread disease, consumption.

The meeting at Josephine was largely attended. By reference to the map the reader can see that all the meetings of this year, beginning with the one at Nevada, have been within a radius of twenty-five miles from home, except the one at Van Alstyne, and that Rockwall, Royse, Nevada, and Farmersville are all in striking distance of Josephine; hence the extra attendance at the last-named place. Especially was this true on the last Sabbath, as we had announced an all-day meeting, with dinner and supper on the ground—regular camp meeting style; and as this had been pretty extensively advertised, there were throngs of people from all the above-named and other places, as well as a general attendance from the country round about. I had a goodly number of invitations to dine with friends; but as there seemed to be no evidence that there would be any coffee served on the ground, I did not make any definite engagement with any one of them, as I felt compelled to have my usual cup of coffee. So when the dinner hour was announced I slipped off to a house where I felt sure there would be this additional luxury; but when I was invited in to dinner I was informed that no fire had been kindled there and that I would have to satisfy myself with a cold dinner all around, and hence there would be no coffee. My disappointment was somewhat painful, but of course I had to make the best of it, and "eat what was set before me, asking no questions." The afternoon services passed off all right, however, as I preached with as much freedom as usual without the coffee that I had imagined I needed so much. When the hour came for the evening meal, I struck off again for a place where I could secure a cup of this beverage;

but by the time I entered the house where I had gone I was invited out to lunch, and found nothing but some ice cream and cakes, which were simply delicious; but still no coffee was served, and so I would have to try the third sermon for that day without having been thus refreshed. But as I again got through very well and felt no special inconvenience from this privation, I was about to decide that I had suffered myself to become enslaved to a habit that was not specially necessary, and was almost resolved to quit it. This was the closing day of the meeting at Josephine, which had been a very good one, though not equal to some others.

After a day or two spent at home, I went to Mt. Vernon to spend a week with Brother Beckham and his people. It will not be forgotten that I was now working under the disadvantage, so far as the work itself was concerned, of having to make visits home almost daily. Still the Lord was with us in the work, giving a degree of success. One evening at Mt. Vernon I had retired alone to the secret grove for a season of prayer. While I was thus engaged several little boys, ranging, I suppose, from eight to fourteen years of age, came near where I was, although they had no knowledge of my presence there, smoking cigarettes. They all seemed to be taking part, from the least to the greatest, and were talking to each other as though this were their regular habit. As I had already at this same place seen young men going home with the girls at night puffing cigarette smoke in the young ladies' faces as they went, I thought I could see a darker future for these young people if there could be no check to this very hurtful habit; but this

seemed hardly possible with such home influences, as some of the women would sit up in the tent where we were holding our meetings and dip snuff together before the public. I do not say that they all did this by any means; but a good many did, and the example was thus before the young people and children. So on the following day I was paying my respects to these practices when it recurred to my mind that I was given to a habit that was controlling my life to a great extent, and that had so recently been proven to be useless. So standing before the congregation and hesitating only long enough to consider the stand I was about to take, I said: "Young men, I've got a habit that is controlling my life to some extent at least; but if you will quit the cigarette habit, I'll quit this." I then turned to Mrs. Dr. Fleming, at whose home I was stopping, and said: "Sister Fleming, you need not make me any more coffee. I've quit." With this a young lawyer present arose and said: "Well, I'm done." Still another reached in his pocket and took a bunch of cigarettes and threw them out. Thus the work went on. For thirty months I did not touch coffee or tea. Not that I regard the use of these as any particular sin—indeed, I think a proper use of either is very beneficial—but I had become a slave to the habit, and did not like to be controlled in this way. And then, more than this, I wanted to save those boys and young men from a worse habit by my example and influence.

The meeting at Mt. Vernon was good, as a large class was added to the Church and the membership greatly strengthened. Still the work was not as far-reaching in its influence and effects as the one I had held there the preceding year. There were some decided influ-

ences against me this time that I did not have then. Among other things, there was a different pastor in charge this time, who, although he had invited me there himself under pressure, was not at all in sympathy with evangelistic work, and said one day publicly and in my presence that he felt that he was no more in that meeting than a notch on a stick and the stick thrown away, although I had made special effort to keep him in the front and to magnify the office of the pastor before his people. It is simply wonderful how prejudice and jealousy can control even a minister of the gospel when it is given full play. I have witnessed much of this in my time and have seen its disastrous effects, though I am glad to say that in the main I have found our Methodist ministers free from this and easy to work with. I do not say here that this pastor was not a good man and true; but he had suffered himself to become unduly prejudiced on this particular line, as many others have done.

As already stated, after this I spent two or three days at Fate with Brother Liles, returning home at the end of each day on a midnight train. The condition of my wife had now become so serious that I told the brethren I was going to quit, and for four months I waited and watched with my loved one, hardly leaving the yard during this whole time. It was a season of great anxiety.

Soon after I came home to remain the Greenville holiness camp meeting began. This was the second meeting held at this camp. Dr. H. C. Morrison and Mrs. Snell were the leaders, with some others to render such assistance as might be necessary. It was truly a great meeting. I attended only two or three

services, however, although it was right near our house. One time I drove out with my wife, and drove round near enough for her to sit in the buggy and hear the sermon, this being the last public service she ever attended on earth. She enjoyed it as much as one could under such circumstances. She was in full sympathy with the holiness movement, although she had never professed the experience. She and our daughter had attended the first camp meeting here, a year previous to this, and were very thoroughly impressed with the power manifest among these people.

The night following the day Mrs. Kilgore was with me at the meeting I walked out to the camp. Some burglars came to our house, walked through the hall, and carried off my valise, together with my dress coat, which was hanging on the wall. They opened the valise and left it open a few hundred yards from the house, taking the contents and the extra coat with them. This gave us a scare, and I did not leave the house any more.

This meeting resulted, they said, in nearly three hundred conversions and reclamations and sanctifications.

The people of Greenville were very kind to us during our protracted afflictions. After four months my precious wife left us for her home in heaven. After sending messages of love to a number of her friends on the last evening and giving the children parting words of advice, she turned to me, saying: "Bring the children to heaven with you." Then she added: "Sing 'Blessed Assurance' at my funeral." Having said that, she could talk no longer, but did say: "They know the rest; tell them to meet me in heaven." These were

her last words with reference to her departure; and after a few hours' lingering she passed to her reward. It did not seem possible for me to keep house longer under the circumstances, and we broke up and scattered, which made it necessary for me to dispose of our little home. Indeed, this would have been almost a necessity anyway, as all this time had been spent at home with very heavy expense, and not a cent of income from any source, and it would be necessary for me to have all the means at my command to meet these new conditions. Hence a heavy sacrifice was made in the sale of the home—and this, too, when I was doing my best to make ends meet. All these changes were soon effected, however, to the best advantage possible, and I was in the field again. Of course all former engagements had been canceled, and I had to begin anew.

During the remainder of this year I assisted in little meetings at Quinland, Emory, and Weston, Tex., and at all these places the Lord gave us a good degree of success; but there was much shadow. No one can appreciate this, however, except those who have passed through similar experiences. The year of "trials and triumphs" is ended, however, and I will soon embark in a new one. I thank the Lord for the great victories he has given me in the work of soul-winning, as recorded in these pages, and for his sustaining grace during the hours of anxiety and final bereavement, as well as for the inspiring hope of a sweet reunion with loved ones beyond the grave. With all the new experiences I will pass out into the years that may be yet allotted to me with a stronger determination than ever before to do his will. I pray that his grace may enable me to be more than courageous through his name.

CHAPTER LXIII.

Indian Territory and Oklahoma.

In the beginning of the new year, and in company with Brothers Phillips and Anderson, I went to South McAlester to assist our pastor there in a meeting which had been planned some time before. The weather was cold to begin with; and as our new brick church there was not completed on the inside and could not be occupied in severe weather, we secured the opera house at a cost of twenty-five dollars a week; and as we used it three weeks, the full cost was seventy-five dollars. Without any sort of doubt, it was the nicest room for a meeting of this kind I had ever used. Besides the use of the room itself, we had the services of their janitor and what coal we used in the furnace all thrown in, which made it very reasonable; and as we had right of way, no theatrical troupe could come in during our meeting to disturb us. I never saw a better start in a meeting than we had here. Scores were evidencing a desire to be saved, and some had already been converted. But in the midst of this good outlook we were visited by one of the worst blizzards I ever saw. The cold continued until our meeting was entirely gone, and we felt that we could not rebuild it at this late stage with such heavy expenses on us as we were carrying. True the daily contributions had kept us up with our rental expenses; but we were being entertained at a

hotel, and having to quit as we did left us to pay our own hotel bill. A small collection taken for us just about covered our railroad expenses. But we were willing to leave off even at this and depend on the next place to help us out of trouble.

Notwithstanding the above disappointment, we had some very pleasant experiences at South McAlester, and therefore remember the place and people quite pleasantly and feel assured that things would have been different every way had the weather been more propitious. Brother Phillips became very much infatuated with a young lady there, and none of us blamed him in the least, as she was quite attractive and accomplished and seemed in every way worthy; but after a lengthy correspondence this, like our meeting, also proved a failure. It was not long before I began to look out on this line myself, and I suppose, like most widowers, acted the simpleton and did some very foolish things. I have often thought and said that no one could show so much weakness or render himself so ridiculous as an old widower, and I suppose I was by no means an exception to the rule. It would not be profitable to record all the foolish things one does, but those who have ever been or are now widowers know something of what I am saying. A man will look with a sort of feeling of contempt on others who are acting thus, and imagine that he himself would try to have some sense if left in such a condition; but when it comes his turn to be so unfortunate he will outstrip all his brethren in the manifestation of folly, and for a time at least cripple his influence. But, influence or no influence, he will push his cause. Such is life and such is the weakness of man.

During my stay at South McAlester I received a letter from a Campbellite preacher at Purcell, Ind. T., to come there and conduct a union meeting for the various Churches of the town. The invitation had the signatures of all the pastors of Purcell except one; but the movement was being led by this Campbellite preacher, who was quite spiritual himself and would not hesitate to work among penitents. He had witnessed my work at another place in Texas and had recommended me to these pastors at Purcell. I accepted this invitation, and went there direct from South McAlester and spent two weeks witnessing a very great work of grace. The meeting was held in the Presbyterian church (Old School), and I was entertained in the home of the pastor of this Church. I expected to find everything stiff and starchy there, and rather dreaded the experience, but was never more agreeably disappointed in my life. There were only the husband and wife, but I told them they had as much life as a crowd of children and kept up about as much noise. This was Rev. Mr. Fisher and wife. To say my stay there was pleasant does not halfway express it. It was simply delightful. Our victory at Purcell was great. Many were saved and added to the Churches. The people came to the services through all sorts of weather, and the place of worship was always crowded to overflowing.

When through at Purcell, I went to Norman, Okla., and spent two weeks. The meeting at this place was good, but not equal to the one at Purcell, although a large class was received into the Church. I was very kindly entertained while there, and in the main my visit was made quite pleasant. Here

again I witnessed the conversion of another girl who had been drawn away from chastity and purity, but who had become tired of the life she had been living. Here again there was a tremendous scare on the part of the women on account of the coming in of this fallen girl. It was all right for debauched men to be redeemed, but one of their unfortunate sisters must be treated with disdain or contempt, not to say virtually rejected from their society. A sermon on this line checked this spirit, however, restored confidence to some extent, and she was accordingly received. But what would her accusers have to say about all this later on? At Norman I made several visits to the country, as I had opportunity, and was greatly impressed with the richness of the soil and the vastness of the country. Truly it is much to be desired as a "home land." However, there are disadvantages there as well as advantages, as in all other countries. Brothers Anderson and Phillips returned to their Texas homes from here, and I went to the capital city of Oklahoma for another meeting.

I found Guthrie to be quite a thriving little city indeed, with all the Churches represented. Our Southern Methodist denomination was at the time quite weak, however, although we had a very nice house of worship, one of the prettiest little chapels I have seen anywhere. My home while here was with Judge Lowe, Secretary of State, and right royally was I entertained. I had an opportunity to visit the Territorial Legislature, which was in session at the time, and met many of the representatives of that new and growing country. The meeting, how-

ever, was by no means a success. I am sure I never saw a harder place to move, especially under the leadership of a Southern Methodist preacher. As already stated, our Church was quite weak there and the town was largely made up of a Northern element of people, who were at the time of which I write entirely out of sympathy with us; and our place of worship was located very inconveniently. Still there was a good work accomplished among the children. Brother Shanks was the pastor there, and would not consent for the meeting to close when it did until I had promised to return at an early date and conduct a great tent meeting in the center of the city, which he seemed to feel sure would be successful. With this arrangement I closed the work here and returned to Texas. After a few days spent with friends at Nevada and Greenville, I was again ready for work, of which I shall write hereafter.

CHAPTER LXIV.

In Texas and Arkansas Again.

Immediately following my return from Oklahoma arrangements were effected with Rev. I. S. Smith for another meeting at Lone Oak, Tex., where Brother Phillips was with me again as chorister. This meeting continued more than a week, and resulted in several conversions and additions to the Church, among whom was an aged man who had been up to this time a skeptic. He was probably eighty years old and was widely known, and hence his change made quite an impression for good in the community. While the occasion was quite pleasant in many respects, there were some things connected with it of a very different character. Among the pleasant things was my stay in the very hospitable home of Rev. Dr. Coppedge. He and his amiable wife seemed to do their utmost to make me happy while with them. All that is pleasant we like to recall and the things that are otherwise we would be glad to forget, but they must make up a part of our lives in this world. Thank God, there will be no such things in heaven! Here again I was offered a beautiful plat of land in connection with the town as a building place, if I would make my home there, but this was not convenient.

When through at Lone Oak, I went to Bellevue, Tex., where the crowning meeting of this year was held. It has rarely been the writer's priv-

ilege to witness such demonstrations of divine power as were manifest in this meeting. During the sermon one morning a young man came in from his farm, where he was at work, crying for mercy as he came. He made no halt at the door, but came right in and down the aisle to the altar, where he fell on his face, begging the people to pray for him. Of course the minister discontinued his discourse, and the service was at once turned into one for penitents. This young man was soon shouting God's praises, and a number of others were saved. A young lady (a Cumberland Presbyterian girl) arose, and with a shower of tears on her face asked the Christians to pray for her brother. She said she felt that her heart would burst if he were not saved. The brother seemed quite stubborn for a time, but finally yielded and became one of the most efficient workers in the meeting. Many other incidents might be mentioned of equal interest, but I pass them. A very large number were converted and added to the Church. When the work was over and I was leaving for home, a congregation assembled on the depot platform and as the train pulled out sang "Meet Me There."

Brother Phillips had answered a special call in Arkansas, and had gone to Little Rock to join another evangelist in work there and elsewhere; but as there was some disappointment in this arrangement, he wired me to meet him at Hot Springs, and we engaged in a three weeks' meeting there with Brother R. R. Moore in Central Church. Hot Springs is a hard place to hold a meeting, owing to the fact that there are so many people constantly coming and going that one hardly preaches to the same audience a

second time. Still there is a resident element that attends church often enough to keep up an interest, and in this meeting seventy odd conversions were reported and an equal number added to the Church. This was small, however, when it is remembered that Hot Springs claims a population of twenty thousand; and besides this, one is preaching almost daily to representatives from every State in the Union, as well as people from other countries. Socially this was one of the most pleasant seasons of all my work in the ministry, and left a sort of divine flavor in my life. It will be remembered that the shadows had fallen upon my pathway, and hence such occasions as the above were as "oases" in the desert.

Leaving Hot Springs, I returned to Texas to fill an engagement at Archer City. The trip was via Fort Worth over the Cotton Belt, thence over the Fort Worth and Denver City to Wichita Falls, out on the Seymour Branch, and a distance of twenty miles by private conveyance. I reached my destination on Saturday evening, and was ready for work on Sunday morning; but the meeting seemed not to have been understood, and the attendance was small. I found Archer City quite a small hamlet in a section where an abundance of small grain was grown, and this was in the midst of harvest time. So I had come a distance of six hundred miles to find the people absorbed with gathering in their grain. The meeting here was a signal failure. I remained only two or three days. On the last day there was only one lady besides the pastor and his wife in attendance at the day meeting; hence I did not feel altogether justifiable in continuing the work longer,

and so closed. The meeting did not pay the expenses of the trip by a good deal. On my return I stopped at Chico, hired a rig, and drove out to Jacksboro, a distance of twenty-eight miles, to see a new-made friend. On the way I got off of the main route, ran on a stump, and broke my buggy. I thought at first it was only the doubletree that was broken, and with some little effort this was spliced so as to make it sufficiently strong for the remainder of the trip; but I had gone only a little farther when the underworks all gave way, having already been broken, and let me down in the middle of a wide stream. It required four hours of hard work with good help to mend it so I could continue the journey, and this delayed me to such an extent that the purpose of my visit was all defeated. It seemed that fate was against me. On my return trip next day I lost my way again, and traveled several miles in a contrary direction; besides all this, I had to pay five dollars extra for the broken buggy when I reached Chico and returned the rig to its owner. So this trip had been a costly one all around and in every way.

When on board the train again and *en route* homeward to Greenville, I was greatly shocked when informed of the untimely death of my friend, Mr. Tom King, the Greenville banker, who had been drowned at night with some others. The story is too sad to be related here. After this I assisted Rev. I. S. Smith in another meeting. This time the meeting was at Twin Oaks, ten miles from Lone Oak, his home. The meeting was good. A large number professed faith in Christ and some were swept into the experience of sanctification. My own experience was

quite varied during the entire year, and up to this time much of it had been quite unpleasant. Immediately following the last work mentioned the Holiness camp meeting was held at Greenville, and I attended it most of the time, but before it closed I left for a visit to Mississippi. I spent one day at Paris, Tex., and three days with friends at Hot Springs, Ark., on the way. When I reached Tupelo, Miss., I arranged with Rev. R. A. Meek for a meeting in his charge the following week; and after making a visit to my mother-in-law and other relatives at Eupora, I returned to Tupelo and conducted the meeting referred to. The work was good, but not altogether what we had hoped for. Some friendships were formed here which were very pleasant indeed, but many such thing last only for a season and leave a sadness in one's life rather than otherwisè.

At the close of the Tupelo meeting I went out and preached at Mooresville, which was one of the appointments on my first circuit. The people came to hear me from many miles around, and the occasion was in every way delightful. Returning to Tupelo the next day, I ran down to Okolona, secured a rig, and drove to Big Creek, in Calhoun County, to visit my brother at our old home. This was my first visit to him in six years. On my return from there I stopped at Buena Vista, where I was prevailed upon to remain over for the Sabbath, as their revival meeting was to begin. On the Monday morning following at this place I met the sweet lady who afterwards became my wife. During my ministry at Buena Vista in earlier years I had, together with my former wife, when we were young, boarded part of

one year in the home of Dr. James R. Ford, and had been in his home often afterwards when his eldest daughter was about twelve years of age; but I had not seen her since until I met her, a beautiful brown-eyed lady now in her twenty-eighth year, on this Monday morning at church. We dined at the same place, and I decided then and there to secure her heart and hand in the marriage relation or make her refuse my offer; and I set about this business at once. Many pleasant hours were spent with her in arranging for this happy event, which need not be recorded here. My efforts proved successful, and we were made one during the following February.

I had an engagement to hold a meeting at Vinita, Ind. T., immediately following my visit to Mississippi, but was detained from going to the place by the quarantine restrictions, and remained in my native State during the remainder of this year and conducted meetings at Aberdeen, Houston, Maben, and Eupora. These meetings were all measurably successful, and many very pleasant things of a social character, and some quite as unpleasant, were experienced by the writer. During the meetings mentioned above I was associated with Brothers Barnes, Kendall, Anderson, and Gibbs, who were pastors of the charges where the meetings were held, and I found them all pleasant companions in the work.

When the year was at an end and the new year had come, I returned to Texas, and, as Providence would have it, made the trip in company with the lady referred to above, who had already consented to become my wife. She had been called to Texas to witness the death of her only brother. She was per-

mitted to be with him seventeen days before he went to his reward in heaven. He was a noble youth. I was also with him during his last days and saw him meet death like a hero. After this I went to Gatesville, Tex., and conducted a revival of two weeks' duration for Rev. C. V. Oswalt. Here the Lord gave us a good ingathering of souls. Brother Oswalt and his noble little wife were both Mississippians and treated me like home folks. The time was spent very pleasantly indeed.

When through at Gatesville, I returned to Temple and joined Brother J. M. Armstrong in a gracious meeting at Seventh Street Church in that city. I was there three weeks, and on February 15 was married to Miss Mary Ford, of Mississippi, of whom I have been writing. We were entertained after our marriage in the home of Mr. J. J. Booker, whose wife is a charming lady and who succeeded in making us very happy while under their roof. After ten days thus spent, we went to Durant, Ind. T., and conducted a meeting of two weeks' duration and then returned to Blue Ridge, Tex., where an equal length of time was spent. *En route* to Blue Ridge we stopped off at Ana Station, Tex., and went out four miles on a visit to my sister's, where three or four days were spent very pleasantly, after which the Blue Ridge meeting was held. At both these meetings last mentioned the pastors, Brothers Scruggs and Graves, seemed to be laboring under such discouragements that but little could be accomplished. It is not well to let the devil get the upper hand of one to such an extent as to create a complaining spirit, which was specially true of the pastor last named. He could see no good in his peo-

ple whatever, and had nothing but abuse to offer them, which did not prove to be a proper remedy. Notwithstanding all this, however, I hope some good was accomplished. While at Blue Ridge we visited the house of my other sister and spent some pleasant hours with her and her family. Leaving there, we were conveyed to Farmersville, where we took the train for Greenville, Tex., to spend the Sabbath with friends and see my baby boy, who had been there since his mother's death. We took charge of him and kept him with us until we reached Mississippi, where we put him in school at Houston for a short time.

Leaving Greenville, we went to Dallas, thence over the Texas & Pacific Railroad to Shreveport, and thence to Minden, La. At Shreveport we spent the night; and as the meetings at Durant, Ind. T., and Blue Ridge, Tex., had paid me so little, we had barely enough with us to pay for our night's lodging at Shreveport and railroad fare to Minden. We had not a nickel over. But arrangements were soon effected for a meeting at Minden with Rev. A. D. McVoy, who was my friend of other days in Mississippi; and when this work was accomplished we had ample means to meet some other obligations and take us on our way to the next place. We were at Minden three weeks, and our stay there was made exceedingly pleasant in every particular. The Lord gave us a decided victory. A large number were saved. We were entertained while there at a private boarding house kept by Mrs. Grigsby, who proved herself to be a very excellent lady, and our entire bill was settled for us by her brother, who was visiting his sisters at the time, and thus we were helped on our way. This young man insisted

on doing this for us as a privilege, which we appreciated the more.

While at Minden arrangements had been made with Rev. T. O. Owen for a meeting with him in his church at Stuttgart, Ark.; and so, leaving Minden, we went to Stuttgart via Monroe, La. One night was spent at Monroe, which is quite a stirring town, and then the remainder of the trip was made through Southeastern Arkansas via Pine Bluff. We reached Stuttgart at night and were taken to the hotel, where we were kept until next day, and then taken to our home for the remainder of our time there. Brother Owen and his people made our stay there very pleasant indeed; but as the Spanish-American War was then under full blast and the excitement was running high, we could accomplish but little visible good in the meeting. It was early in the history of our work here that the report of Dewey's victory at Manila reached us. Besides this, the First Arkansas Regiment was being made up at this time, and a full company left Stuttgart for Camp Thomas at Little Rock, and there was much excitement. Just here an unexpected trial came to me. A letter reached me from my eldest son, who was at the time in school at Arkadelphia Methodist College, expressing a great desire to join the army. He wanted to go to Little Rock at once as a volunteer. After brief consideration, however, I wired him to go to Little Rock, where I would meet him on the following Tuesday. I thought that possibly after talking over the matter together he would change his mind and return to school. Of course I could have prevented his going, as he was not of age; but I did not wish to discourage him in

the matter. I felt that I had as well furnish a boy for the army as any one else, and then I thought it proper to cultivate true patriotism in the heart and life of my son, and I have always felt that our cause was a just one with reference to the war with Spain. Cuba ought to have been freed from the iron yoke. Between the time I wrote my son that I would meet him at Little Rock and the time I was to go the company left Stuttgart, and the scene was one of the most affecting I had ever witnessed. Strong men wept like children as they bade their friends good-by. This intensified the solicitude I had already felt concerning my son; but when the day came, and we were together, and I found him still quite anxious to go, I gave my consent; and after spending a few hours with him, I kissed him good-by as he stepped onto the street car to leave me for the camp. My baby boy also was with me to join me in bidding his brother adieu. I had left my wife at the hotel at Fair Oaks, Ark., on the preceding night. She continued the trip on the next train to Mississippi; and after parting with my boy, I also started for Mississippi via Memphis. My little son and I spent the following night at Byhalia with my lifelong friend, Rev. R. M. Davis, who was in charge of our Church there. The next day we continued our trip to Sherman, Miss., where we spent the night with my brother-in-law, Mr. S. H. Hall, and his family, and then returned to New Albany to join my wife in a little visit among her relatives there and elsewhere. Leaving her there, I continued the trip to her mother's home, in Clay County, and to Houston, Miss., to attend to some business which demanded my attention. This done, I returned to Sherman, where I was met

by my wife, and soon afterwards we went to her mother's home to spend awhile, thus completing our first round together in the evangelistic field. We had been married only four months, but my wife had already begun to develop some alarming symptoms of approaching consumption, of which much may be written hereafter.

Our stay at home gave me an opportunity to make a round in the interest of my children, as to their schooling, etc. As I had, influenced by the bright testimony of Brother Owen and others at Stuttgart, made a new consecration of myself to the Lord, I was quite anxious to get out again into the work of soul-winning, and it was but a little while until we were off for Kosciusko, making the trip in part through the country via Sparta, Atlanta, and Big Creek to Coffeeville. One week was spent at Big Creek and Pittsboro with relatives, after which, as above indicated, the trip was continued to Kosciusko. The purpose of our visit to Kosciusko was twofold: First, to open up some work in our loved employ; and, secondly, to spend some time with our pastor there, Rev. J. C. Park, and family, who were my wife's near relatives. The visit was not fruitless in either respect, as our stay at Kosciusko was made exceedingly pleasant with the relatives, and doors were opened for some very gracious revivals on the Sallis work, with Rev. A. T. Buck and his people. Back of this, however, during our stay at Kosciusko I attended the Columbus District Conference at Piney Grove, on the Columbus Circuit, where I had traveled and preached two years and where I met with many friends of other days, and on my return from Columbus I took in the

Durant District Conference at Eupora, where I was entertained in the home of my first wife's sister. There was more pleasure associated with all these privileges than can be here written. Having made this little round among the brethren and old friends and relatives, I was ready for the work on the Sallis Circuit. During the second meeting, which was specially interesting and fruitful, a letter came announcing the extreme illness of my daughter at Big Creek, and my wife went at once to her bedside and watched until I could close the work and follow on. She was soon convalescent, however, and on the way to recovery, and we were off with the little boys to fill an engagement with Rev. J. W. Bell at Houlka. I spent eight days in this meeting and witnessed a wonderful work. As many as twenty-two were converted at the altar at a single service. An unpleasantness arose during this meeting, however, as the result of our having unintentionally occupied the hour of a Sabbath belonging to a minister of another Church. It was their regular day at Houlka, and the minister became greatly offended at us for not having given way for his hour; but all this was overcome and the above results followed.

My next engagement was at Hebron, east of Macon, Miss., with Rev. J. M. Barnes. I had worked with Brother Barnes before, and was very glad to have this new opportunity of spending another time with him. The meeting was good, but by no means satisfactory. The community is made up of a good element of people, and they certainly know how to entertain a preacher, but the spiritual tide was not very high among them.

Other meetings were planned. I had already begun the work at Pittsboro with a splendid outlook for success, when a note was sent to me by the town authorities that if I did not wish to be detained in the town an unlimited length of time I had better retire at once, as the town would be placed under strict quarantine restrictions that afternoon. So I put my grip in a wagon going in the direction of home and immediately followed on foot until I had gotten outside the quarantine limits, where I spent part of the night; and, having secured a conveyance, continued the trip as far as Houston, reaching there about sunrise, and then went on home.

The following week I responded to the call to Atlanta, Miss., and again was compelled to give up the work on account of the coming in of my son on furlough from the army, as the people of the little town were afraid of him because of yellow fever reports, and hence were unwilling for him to come among them. Thus I was defeated again; hence I did not attempt any more work in Mississippi at this time, but began to plan at once for some work in East Texas.

CHAPTER LXV.

Visits to East Texas and South Carolina.

Equipped with health certificates, etc., I was off again for Texas. Owing to the strict quarantine regulations at this time, it became necessary for me to go via Cairo, Ill., which, as may be seen from the map, almost doubled the distance of the trip from Okolona, Miss., my starting point, to East Texas, where I had been invited to hold some meetings. My wife accompanied me on this trip. Leaving Okolona early one morning, we first ran up to Rives, Tenn., where we stopped off and spent one day and night with friends. The time was passed here quite pleasantly. We then continued the trip over the Mobile & Ohio Railroad to Cairo, where we crossed the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, thence over the Cotton Belt to Shreveport, La., where we made connection with the Houston & Texas Central Railroad for Tenaha, Tex., and thence by private conveyance to Center, where the first engagement was to be met.

I found Center, the capital of Shelby County, to be a very nice little town, and its population first-class in every sense of the word. Rev. J. B. Turrentine was in charge of our Methodist Church, and he gave us a warm welcome and soon made us feel quite at home. Although we were a day or two ahead of time in reaching the town, our presence was soon announced and arrangements made for the meeting to begin at once.

At first the attendance was not large; but after we had on Saturday afternoon taken some of our workers and held a service of song and prayer on the Public Square, which attracted much attention, we had no further trouble as to congregations; but, on the contrary, usually had more than could be accommodated in our commodious house of worship. The interest continued to increase until the whole town and surrounding country seemed to have been swept into the tide, and scores were saved. The meeting lasted two weeks; and when we left we took with us a heart full of love for Brother Turrentine and his people. By this time arrangements had been made for a meeting at Tenaha; so we bade adieu to our new-made friends who had so kindly entertained us, and were off for the new field.

Rev. S. M. Thompson was our pastor at Tenaha, and he had planned well in every way for the meeting. Here again the work moved off slowly at first; but as the time passed the interest gathered momentum until there was such a stir as is rarely witnessed. Many shouted God's praises aloud. Large numbers were saved, and a great many were added to the Church. The success of this meeting was also, in a large measure at least, attributable to the open street meetings held in the early history of the campaign. Brother Turrentine was with us a day or two in this meeting also, and we were delighted to have him. He is such a social man. He was stocked up with a rich fund of anecdotes. A sample of these might be of interest to the reader. He related a story of a Hardshell Baptist preacher who when he would speak of his hope of heaven would invariably wind up by saying that when he got to heaven he expected to play upon a "pessel-

tree" (psaltery) with the "ark-angels" (archangels). Brother Turrentine seemed to have been blessed with a special fitness or talent for relating such things to the best advantage, and thus furnish a good deal of fun in the social circles. Our stay at Tenaha was delightful.

From here we went to Alto to assist Brother W. L. Pate in a revival meeting, where we were right royally entertained at the parsonage. Owing to wife's declining health, I had written Brother Pate that it might be best to give us a place at a hotel; but Sister Pate insisted that if Mrs. Kilgore was not well she would rather have us in her own home. We were fully convinced before we had been there long that no mistake had been made at this point, as our good Sister Pate showed herself abundantly competent to meet every demand. Their hospitality was truly unstinted, and we soon learned to love them very much. Our meeting, however, was not so large in its results as the ones that had gone before; still some good was accomplished.

It was while here that my son made his final return to us from the Spanish-American War, having been mustered out of service at Little Rock during the preceding week. Of course his coming gave us great joy. He had come home on a furlough once before; but the people in Mississippi manifested such fear of him, owing to a report of the existence of yellow fever in the camps, that his visit could not be enjoyed, although we ourselves were not afraid of him; but now that the war was over and he had returned for good, our pleasure was the greater. An amusing coincidence was connected with his coming this time. The principal of the

public school at Alto was a Baptist minister, and he was a splendid man. He had two daughters, who, although quite young for the business, were assisting him in the school, and one of them served as organist during our meeting, and proved herself in every way quite efficient and very pleasant. We were all dining together at the Methodist parsonage when I asked the mother of the organist what she would take for her. She replied that she supposed it would be an easy thing to effect a trade if I had any boys to offer, to which I replied that I had the very boy to suit the case, a young soldier, and that we would consider a trade on at once. I had no idea at the time that my son was nearer than Little Rock, a distance of three hundred miles, and hence was greatly surprised when I saw him in my audience that afternoon. The coincidence was the source of some amusement, and it began to look a little more like a sure-enough bargain when arrangements were effected for him to remain for a time in a drug store at Alto.

When the meeting here was at an end Mrs. Kilgore and I went to Timpson, where my next engagement was to be met. Rev. J. W. Downs, the pastor, and Rev. J. T. Smith, the presiding elder, had planned the work, and everything was in readiness for us. We were entertained at the Jennings Hotel, and our stay there was quite pleasant indeed. The meeting was good. Some notable conversions were witnessed. Among them was that of a Mr. Garrison, who was a saloon keeper and widely known. His conversion was powerful, and there was much rejoicing over him on the part of the Christian people of the town and community. He was a son-in-law of the lady who entertained us, and

hence we were the better prepared to rejoice with them. Many other incidents might be recorded as connected with this meeting, but I desist.

When our work was done at Timpson we spent a few days at Garrison with Brother Cain and his people; but as the weather was very unsettled, we could do but little there, and hence wound up and went to the Texas Annual Conference at Houston, where two days were spent quite profitably, as we met many of the preachers and people and heard many good things. Bishop Galloway's presence here made us feel quite at home, as he was from our own State.

Leaving Houston, we went to Helena, Tex., south of San Antonio, where we expected to remain quite a while; but found the weather so very changeable while there that we decided the climate would not suit Mrs. Kilgore's condition; and so, after a few days spent with friends there, we continued our trip to San Antonio, and thence to Temple. At San Antonio we consulted a German specialist as to wife's case, who gave us much encouragement; but her trouble developed rapidly afterwards, and it soon became evident that her case was quite serious. We chose Temple as our home, however, and soon arranged for keeping house there. As I had to make a visit to Mississippi on other business, I brought my little boys back to Texas with me. On the first day of January we moved into our new quarters, and felt that we would be happy. This was our first round of housekeeping since our marriage, now nearly twelve months; but in less than one month we were convinced that Mrs. Kilgore's strength was not equal to this task; and hence other arrangements were made for the little boys, and we

broke up and went to boarding. Before I could do any more work wife's health had failed entirely, so that she was henceforth confined to her bed. Before her confinement, however, I had spent a few days at Lufkin, where I experienced some extremely cold weather. which broke up our meeting there. Then I went to Morgan, Tex., where, in company with my former singer, Ed Phillips, and Pastor G. H. Hodge, I witnessed a great work of grace, which wound up my work in Texas for that season. I had arranged for a second visit to Lufkin, but could not fill the engagement, owing to the above-named sickness.

After several weeks of anxious waiting and watching, I returned with the sick loved one to Mississippi. We had been expecting wife to die for quite a little while already, and her sister had come to us from the old home in Mississippi; but as she had lingered so long, we thought best to bring her home again, especially as this was her desire. So, with the consent of her physicians, we made the trip, after a safe run of two days and nights. Among her attendant physicians while in Texas was her own uncle, Dr. S. Q. Ford, in whom we all had implicit confidence both as a man and a physician; still wife was delighted to reach home and be with her mother again, even at the sacrifice of the attendance of her uncle and the attention given her by his noble wife. Having reached home, many long, weary weeks were passed before she was able to sit up again, and constant fears were entertained by us all that she would never be out again, even to move about the house; and in this we were not very much mistaken, as she continued all the remainder of the time for the five years which followed almost as

helpless as a babe. Most of the time during these years the writer experimented on various things to try to keep employed and at the same time be at home; but every enterprise seemed to fail in my hand. I can but conclude that the good and wise God had a purpose in all this for our good if we could only understand the workings of his will, and that the reason for these things will finally be made plain to us. Among some of the benefits which seem to be evident at present is the development of self-reliance and industry on the part of the children, and then the grace of patience and endurance has been developed in my own life.

During these years I held meetings when I could leave home at the following places: Houston, McCondy, Egypt, Houlka, Pittsboro, and Una, all in Mississippi; one meeting each at Jasper, Fla., Birmingham, Ala., and Atlanta, Ga.; and two in South Carolina. These meetings were all good. Besides the above work, I accepted a pastoral charge in South Carolina, hoping to take my wife there; but when it became evident, after I had served the charge five months, that she could never go to the work, I gave it up and returned to Mississippi. I had already made one extra trip home and back since taking the work; and as I knew that I could not keep this up, I thought it best to turn the charge over to the presiding elder to be supplied, which I did. My departure seemed to be regretted by most of the people, as they apparently appreciated my labors among them. I was never treated more cordially by any people, and I will always remember with gratitude and love the Caraways, the Brittons, the Hemingways, the Rhems, the Jacksons, the Rileys, the Robins,

and many others too numerous to mention, who showed me much kindness while there.

One other thing in this connection I would record with gratitude. I had for more than ten years prayed to the good Lord to make it possible, if according to his will, for me to visit South Carolina once more before the death of my old uncle, Reuben Hay, and also permit me to see Uncle Gideon Hay, who was growing very old; and my prayers were fully answered. I found them still alive and able to be up; but in less than six months they had both gone to their reward in heaven. I was permitted to be with Uncle Reuben when he left us and to remain and comfort his family by making them frequent visits during most of the year; and my stay with them was made very pleasant, even more than I can here express. He left a lovely family—all in the Church but two at the time of his death, and these remaining two united with the Church under my ministry while there. Praise the Lord for his great goodness to me in all this!

CHAPTER LXVI.

Many Changes.

After returning to Mississippi from South Carolina I found it necessary to remain at home several months at the bedside of my wife. She rallied again, however, when the springtime came, and it was made possible for me to get out again for some more work. I joined the brethren in the crusade against the open saloon in Marshall County, Miss., in which we won a great victory. During the above-named campaign I also assisted Rev. J. W. Anderson in some meetings near Byhalia, Miss., in Marshall County, where the fight was on. In these much good was accomplished.

I then took charge of a work at Ashland made vacant by a brother failing to take the charge when appointed. This I served four months, when it again became necessary for me to spend my whole time at home for a while. After this I was enabled to hold a great revival at Troy, Miss., and another good meeting at a country church near Nettleton; and then went home to remain continuously for five months, until the death of my wife, who had lingered with us from the time she developed that dread disease, consumption, more than five years. Her sister, Mrs. Brand, had fallen a victim to the same sad disease, and preceded her to the final home only eighteen days. They were both taken from the same home to their resting place in the cemetery to sleep side by side until the resurrection. The

mother, having thus followed the remains of the last member of her own family to the grave, still remains on this side the last river.

As soon as I could round up matters there, I made a little visit to Pensacola, Fla., where I spent a few days with my eldest son, who held a position there at the time, and then went to Memphis, Tenn., to encourage another son in his work there. From Memphis I went to Chattanooga, where a third son held a position with the Southern Hotel. It can be seen from the above record that my children had become scattered. My daughter and baby boy were at this time in North Carolina—daughter teaching at Littleton College and her little brother, Allen, in school at Warrenton. They were all doing nicely in their respective places, which was a great comfort to me. I spent several weeks at Chattanooga, and held evangelistic meetings at Whiteside Street Church, Sherman Heights, Ridgedale, and other Churches while there, and witnessed a good work. This was notably true at Ridgedale, where the Lord gave us a great victory. This work was opened for me by the Rev. Dr. Long, presiding elder of the Chattanooga District. Dr. Long and I had served adjoining charges in the North Mississippi Conference and had worked together in meetings before, which fact gave me increased pleasure in this good work in his district. The Doctor is a grand good man, and one cannot be associated with him long without feeling that he is himself made a better man.

About this time, however, I suffered an attack of la grippe, which came very near ending my life, and was the occasion of my making a visit to relatives in the Carolinas. When able to begin work again, a charge

was offered me at Roberdell, N. C., which was made vacant by the death of a preacher. This I accepted, and filled until the following Conference; and I made many friends in this new territory. The people were so kind to me that I can never forget them. The Lord blessed our labors together very greatly on the Roberdell Circuit. While serving this charge I made headquarters at Rockingham, where I preached a number of times at different churches, and learned to love the people there very much indeed. My home while at Rockingham was with Rev. Mr. Wright and family (Baptists), who treated me with great kindness and who hold a very warm place in my heart. It gives me pleasure to mention in this connection the names of the Everetts, the Ledbetters, the Gibsons, the Lentzes, the Keys, the Thomases, the Terrys, the Garretts, the Smiths, and others too numerous to mention, who are remembered with great pleasure because of their many tokens of Christian friendship while among them; and last, but not least by any means, our faithful and princely presiding elder, Rev. John N. Cole, and our pastor at Rockingham at the time, Rev. John H. Hall, to whom I am due a debt of gratitude I can never pay. I am thankful to our Heavenly Father for having associated me with these good men for the time mentioned.

When this year was at an end I was planning to return to the West, hoping to be with my children more, when news came that Rev. Mr. Oglesby, of Aberdeen charge, had lost his life in a railroad wreck; and I was solicited to take his place on the work for the remainder of the year, which I consented to do, and took charge at once. There are five Churches in this charge

—namely, Aberdeen, Biscoe, Star, Asbury, and Johnson Grove, all on the railroad—and the charge is made up of the very best class of people. I can mention notably the Pages, the Pleasants, the Camerons, the Thomsons, the Masemores, the Steeds, the Asburys, the Shamburgers, and many others who are loyal Methodists and devout Christians and who seem ever ready to respond to every call to duty; hence a preacher finds it both easy and pleasant to serve them. My work here was crowned with abundant success, especially in a material way, as many improvements were made on our Church property, both with reference to our houses of worship and the parsonage. Besides this, we enjoyed some fine revivals, thus adding to the spiritual good of the charge. Many pleasant incidents and some unpleasant could be recorded of the year; but as such are incident to all years, I deem it unprofitable to make these records. It affords me pleasure to state here, however, that the pleasant events outnumber those that were otherwise by far.

It was here that I met Miss Ella Melton, of High Point, N. C., with whom I was united in marriage at the close of the Conference year, and who is now with me as a true helpmeet in the gospel—beautiful in character and consecrated to the work of the Lord.

During these years in the Carolinas it was my privilege to visit Charleston, Wilmington, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Richmond, and other noted towns and cities along the Atlantic Seaboard, and to see many things that were new and more or less novel to me, and to associate more extensively with my relatives in these States, of whom mention has already been made in these pages—for all of which I feel devoutly thankful

to Him who leads and guides those who put their trust in Him.

Thus we passed to another year and to other scenes and experiences, to be recorded in a future chapter. Before closing this, however, I feel that I should make special mention of my associations in the work with C. H. Key, who is one of the sweetest singers I have ever heard. He was with me both years of which record is made in this chapter, and did very efficient work as chorister. W. W. Gibson, of Roberdell, also rendered us great help in the service of song. These brethren are remembered for their good deeds; and I hope to yet be associated with them in future work if it is the Lord's will.

CHAPTER LXVII.

To Florida Again.

When the year at Aberdeen was at an end and its work finished, I went to High Point to spend a short time with relatives, during which time I accepted offered work in Florida; and as soon as the Christmas holidays were over, I went to my new field of labor. The route was over the Seaboard Air Line via Columbia, S. C., Savannah, Ga., and Jacksonville, Fla., to Ocala, and thence to Reddick, where I had been appointed to serve. Reddick is a nice little town on the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, ten miles from Ocala, and is made up of a nice class of people. There were four other Churches in the charge—all on the railroad. It is an easy charge to serve, and I would doubtless have had a good year, but was called back home by serious sickness, and other hindrances came in my way to prevent my return to Florida. I regretted the apparent necessity of this very much, as the good people of Reddick had shown me every kindness possible. Although my stay with them was brief, I can never forget the special favors conferred by Ed Rou, C. C. Priest, John C Dupree, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Gatrell, Brother Mayo, and others, together with those of their respective families; and besides all this, the encouragement given me by the good presiding elder there, Rev. Francis R. Bridges.

While in Florida I heard Bishop Hoss deliver a lec-

ture on his travels in South America, which was greatly enjoyed. I also spent a day or two in Jacksonville, where I was shown many things of interest in this city of sunshine and flowers. Other things might be mentioned as connected with my sojourn in the State, but I must, as already stated, leave these scenes and good people.

I gave up the work and spent most of the year with my children at Chattanooga, as we all met there and spent several months together, which privilege was greatly enjoyed, as it had been so long since we had all been with each other before. During our residence there I conducted a fine revival at Rossville, Ga., for Rev. Dr. Smith, and did a good deal of other Church work in and around the city of Chattanooga. We had a very pleasant home while there, and enjoyed the privilege of entertaining some of our relatives and friends. However, it became necessary for me to return to North Carolina, and I was soon engaged in revival work in this State, and witnessed some of the greatest revivals I had been in for several years. So this year, with its varied experiences, was rapidly drawing to a close. Many new acquaintances had been made and friendships formed which will linger with me as among the pleasant memories of life. Among these new-made friends none are appreciated more than Rev. Make Hurley, with whom I was associated in some of my best meetings. Brother Hurley is widely known in this section, and to enjoy his personal friendship is to gain a strong hold on a large element of people throughout this part of the Old North State. I might also mention the names of Brothers Eads, Falls, Williamson, and others, as well as Revs. Catron, Triplett, Williams, and

others in connection with the Chattanooga work, whose companionship in the work proved a great benediction to my soul.

During this year I enjoyed the long-coveted privilege of attending the great Southern Baptist Convention, which was held in the city of Chattanooga, where I heard that noted divine, Dr. Hawthorne, preach a great sermon, and others of note in this great denomination. It was also my good fortune this year to be present at the State Sunday School Convention of North Carolina, at Charlotte, N. C., and listen to addresses by some of the Sunday school workers of national reputation. In addition to all this, I had just passed through a great meeting (Baptist) conducted by the celebrated Dr. H. M. Wharton, who is truly a wonderful man.

Besides the occasions mentioned in connection with the Atlantic States, I attended District Conferences at Gibson, Raeford, Concord, and Asheville, N. C., and Annual Conferences at Chester and Darlington, S. C., and at Wilson, N. C., where I made the acquaintance and enjoyed the wise counsel of many ministers and consecrated laymen of our great Church.

Even during the brief time since I made my first visit here several of those with whom I had preached and sung and shouted in this territory had gone to their final home. How uncertain is life! I have not quite reached my half hundred years yet; but so many of those with whom I have labored in this world have crossed the last river that I cannot avoid a feeling of sadness, and am thus constantly reminded that my time is not far ahead.

Only one other incident of this year will now be

mentioned. On our return trip from Florida one day was spent at Macon, Ga., in the home of wife's brother, Mr. J. B. Melton, who with his amiable wife and her sister made our visit quite pleasant, except for our anxiety for the sick loved one to whose bedside we had been called. While in Macon I made a little visit to the home of an old friend of other days, Mr. J. H. L. Gerdine, formerly of West Point, Miss., where I spent two years as pastor of the Methodist Church. Brother and Sister Gerdine seemed real glad to see me, and I was delighted to learn that their children, some of whom I had received into the Church, were leaders in the Church themselves—two of them serving in mission fields in the Orient, one a presiding elder. These parents were justly proud of their children, and I rejoiced with them in the course they had taken. I was also pleased to find my brother-in-law, Mr. Melton, enjoying a good degree of prosperity.

Now looking back over the fifty years of my pilgrimage, I can easily see where many serious mistakes might have been avoided and many offered opportunities improved which would have resulted in the development of the Christian graces in my own heart and life more perfectly and at the same time enabled me to have done much more good for others; but as we cannot live our time over again, we must let "bygones be bygones," and move forward with the hope that the mistakes and failures of the past may be overruled for good, and that we may be enabled to profit by them, and thus make a successful run for the eternal city to meet with the multitudes gone before as well as those who come after.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Two Years at Pleasant Garden and King's Mountain.

As the year was closing during which the events recorded in the preceding chapter transpired I was conducting a successful revival for Rev. L. A. Falls at South Main Street, High Point, N. C.; and it was here I met and was introduced to Rev. S. B. Turrentine, presiding elder of the Greensboro District, whom I found to be a most excellent gentleman, and who with the influence of Brother Falls, who is also a lovable character, prevailed on me to accept a pastoral charge in the Western North Carolina Conference; and although I did not attend the session of the Conference at Mt. Airy, I was appointed to the Pleasant Garden Circuit, where I served the following year and made a host of new friends.

The year's work was crowned with abundant success in all lines. Soon after taking charge of the work I began a winter meeting, and received twenty-four into our Church on the Sunday of Christmas week. This gave me a good beginning, and I was in a revival all the year on the work, witnessing hundreds of conversions, with many added to the Church.

Early in the year, however, I suffered a severe attack of la grippe, and thought again that my work was about finished. I was not able to work for several weeks, and resigned my charge, and another preacher

was appointed to fill out the year; but in about a month or six weeks I had so far recovered as to take up the work again, and was placed in charge, the other minister being assigned to another field. This was Rev. J. C. Harman, a young man of excellent qualities and splendid attainments. While serving the work he boarded in our home, and we found him very pleasant indeed. When I offered my resignation for him to take charge, Rev. J. F. Craven, a superannuate minister, whose home was in our work, offered a resolution that I should be given the use of the parsonage without cost until Conference, and in this way I escaped the expense of a move and reassumed the work on the charge with the results already recorded.

Before the year had closed dear Brother Craven, who offered the resolution referred to, died, and it was made my duty to preach his funeral sermon before a large concourse of people, and also prepare his memoir for the Annual Conference. His last public work in the ministry was at our camp meeting at his church, which he seemed to enjoy very much indeed. He was truly a good man, and lives in the hearts of many who knew him.

Among the pleasant things of the year additional to the revivals were the Children's Day services. These were extra good.

Among the good people of the charge I recall the names of the Tuckers, the Rosses, the Beckerdites, the Lewises, the Zinks, the Smiths, the Yows, the McLeans, the Hodgins, the Fields, the Ledbetters, the Cobles, the Clarks, and others too numerous to mention—all of whom I hold in high esteem and remember their manifold acts of kindness with gratitude.

When the year closed, I was returned to this charge for another year; but owing to some other changes, I was moved at the end of the first quarter and placed in charge of King's Mountain Station. It was no small battle I had to fight in deciding to leave these good people to take charge among comparative strangers, as I was battling with la grippe again; but it seemed the Lord's will that the change be made, and so we were soon in our new charge to find ourselves serving a delightful people, who are very appreciative and always ready to encourage their pastor. It was through the influence of Rev. G. F. Kirby that I was appointed here, and I can never forget his kindness, as the year has been made very pleasant for us here. Brother Kirby was my predecessor in this charge, and a noble fellow he is. I am also due a debt of gratitude to Rev. H. M. Blair and Mr. C. H. Ireland for brotherly advice with reference to this change and other appreciated kindnesses. I am hoping to round up with a good report for Conference.

During the two years recorded in this chapter I have held additional meetings at Cedar Falls, South High Point, Shelby, and Rock Springs Camp Ground. This camp meeting was the largest I ever attended as to the number of tenters, there being more than three hundred tent holders and five or six thousand people in attendance. The interest was very fine—only the people do not plan to stay long enough to witness real success.

Altogether this has been a pleasant year. In our home we have enjoyed the presence of some one of our relatives most of the time. My daughter spent her vacation with us, which was a great comfort to us;

also two of my grown sons have visited us. The Lord has given us another son also, now nearly two years old, who has brought much sunshine into our home and hearts. We named him Page for that princely layman in our Church at Aberdeen, N. C.—namely, Henry A. Page.

The name of one friend has been left out whom I must here mention before closing these notes, as he has helped me so much in accomplishing the above results, especially at Pleasant Garden. I refer to Prof. Oscar Woosley, a perfect little gentleman in every sense of the word.

Other names might be mentioned and other facts recorded, but I forbear, only to say that our sojourn in North Carolina has given me the additional privilege of visiting our national capital at Washington, D. C., and also making a trip through Maryland, West Virginia, and Ohio. This I had long desired to do, and the Lord made it possible for me to do so.

Another coveted privilege has been enjoyed during this last year—that of attending the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. It had already been my pleasure to attend every Conference in our Church from the Church Conference to the General Conference, every convention in the Baptist Church from their Church Conference to the great Southern Convention, and I had been in all the gatherings of the Presbyterian Church except the General Assembly, and now this privilege has been granted me.

With all the victories, privileges, and achievements of these closing years there have come many things not so pleasant. In fact, some of the most stubborn trials and disappointments of my life have come

to me in the midst of these victories. Life is a mixed cup, and I suppose it should be so. Still, with all this I am now permitted to record these closing notes of my book in the midst of as good friends as I have ever found anywhere. It is pleasant for me to mention the names of the Fultons, the Garretts, the Falls, the Dillings, the Kings, the Reagans, the Mauneys, the Goforths, and a host of others whose names are recorded in the book of life.

My good presiding elder, Rev. R. M. Hoyle, has been in and out with me a few times this year, and I have found his companionship quite pleasant and helpful. Also the pastors of the other Churches here, Brothers Forbes, Bell, and Beach, have contributed to my happiness since coming to this charge.

As I am closing these notes the Blue Ridge Annual Conference of the M. E. Church is in session at this place, with Bishop D. A. Goodsell, of New York, presiding. The sessions of the Conference are quite interesting, and bring a blessing to our town. They have some strong men, who seem quite fraternal. The Bishop has impressed all here as being a great and good man. He is very cordial indeed.

I must now conclude these chapters, with the hope of meeting many of those whose names have been mentioned in its pages, and many others with whom I have been associated in the work, whose names could not be mentioned for lack of space, in that bright and better world above, where there will be no more trials, and where our joy will be full.

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